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MID-TERM REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF THE ACTION PLAN (2021-2025) FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM STRATEGY IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA (2021-2030)

Evaluation Period: January 2021 - June 2023

Final report

November 2023

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| APC | Agency for Prevention of Corruption |
| APIGP | Action Plan for the Implementation of the Government Programme |
| BOS | Belgrade Open School |
| CHU | Central Harmonisation Unit |
| CIPIPPD | Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisation |
| EU | European Union |
| GENSEC | General Secretariat of the Government of the Republic of Serbia |
| GIZ | German Organisation for International Cooperation |
| HCSC | High Civil Service Council |
| HRM | Human Resource Management |
| HRMS | Human Resources Management Service |
| ICT | Information and -Communication Technologies |
| IL | Intervention Logic |
| IMPG | Inter-ministerial Project Group for professional affairs in co-ordinating and monitoring the process of the implementation of the PAR Strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2025 |
| ITE | Office for IT and e-Government |
| LPS | Law on the Planning System of the Republic of Serbia |
| LSG | Local Self-Government |
| LSGU | Local Self-Government Unit |
| MEI | Ministry of European Integration |
| MoF | Ministry of Finance |
| MoI | Ministry of the Interior |
| MPALSG | Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government |
| NAD | National priorities for international assistance |
| NAPA | National Academy of Public Administration |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OGP | Open Government Partnership |
| OMT | Online monitoring tool |
| OSS | One-Stop Shop |
| PAR | Public Administration Reform |
| PAR SRC | PAR Sector Reform Contract |
| PARS AP | Action Plan for the period 2021-2025 for the implementation of the Public Administration Reform Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030 |
| PARS | Public Administration Reform Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030 |
| PFM | Public Financial Management |
| PFMRP | Public Financial Management Reform Programme |
| PPD | Public policy document |
| PPM | Public Policy Management |
| PPMP | Public Policy Management Process |
| PPMRRP | Public Policy Management and Regulatory Reform Programme |
| PPS | Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia |
| ReSPA | Regional School for Public Administration |
| RGA | Republic Geodetic Authority |
| RS | Republic of Serbia |
| SAB | State Administration Body |
| SAI | State Audit Institution |
| SBS | Sectoral Budget Support |
| SCTM | Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities |
| ToC | Theory of Change |
| UISN | Unified Information System |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |

# SUMMARY

The new Strategy for Public Administration Reform (PARS) for the period 2021-2030, in accordance with the reconstructed intervention logic, aims to further improve the work of the public administration in accordance with the European Principles of Public Administration in order to contribute to economic stability and improve the standards of living in Serbia.

The Action Plan for the period 2021-2025 for the implementation of the Public Administration Reform Strategy of the Republic of Serbia (PARS AP) has five specific objectives divided into three thematic areas, including human resource management, service delivery, and accountability and transparency. These three areas, together with the area related to the PAR communication and co-ordination, which is included in the Operational Plan, are the subject of this review.

**Methodology**

For this mid-term review, the evaluation team has utilised the theory of change to reconstruct the intervention logic for PARS AP in Serbia. This involves a correlation model examining the causal chain, encompassing inputs, direct outputs, outcomes, and impacts. The aim is to analyse the individual measures' outputs and their contribution to targeted reform initiatives within the framework of PARS AP for the period 2021-2025.

Hence, the analysis adopted a systemic approach, enabling assessment across three thematic areas (human resources management, service delivery, and accountability and transparency) alongside the operational plan for communication and co-ordination. This approach facilitated the examination of activities and outcomes within these four domains, evaluating both internal and external factors, their interplay, complexity, and their collective influence on the effectiveness of intended outcomes and impacts.

The data collection process involved a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative collection methods from various sources. Quantitative and qualitative information was gathered from multiple sources including national data covering the implementation of the PARS AP between 2021 and 2025, and specific data in the context of monitoring reform activities, outputs, effects, and corresponding indicators. Primary **quantitative data** was obtained through two online surveys: one targeting administrative bodies and another aiming at civil society organisations. For **qualitative** primary data collection, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 29 key stakeholders (25 W, 4 М). This group included key figures from central-level institutions (Government, MPALSG, key PAR implementing bodies) and external stakeholders (experts from public administrations, donors, and development partners and others). Furthermore, a focus group was organised involving four representatives from civil society organisations (1 W, 3 M).

During the review, two primary evaluation questions were introduced and expanded upon, using indicators delineated in the review matrix (Appendix 2). This matrix served as the framework for presenting the review results and highlighting key findings

**Key findings of the Review**

***Question 1. To what extent will the specific outputs of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 be achieved/likely to be achieved?***

In the realm of public administration efficiency and quality, the Republic of Serbia (RS) has notably advanced on both regional and global scales, as recognised by the OECD SIGMA and World Bank criteria. The public perception of administrative services, particularly electronic services and simplified administrative procedures, alongside the introduction of more cohesive administrative bodies, remains consistently stable. A comparative analysis of data concerning citizens' and businesses' overall satisfaction with services offered between 2020 and 2022 reveals a sustained trend. The satisfaction level consistently hovers around level 4, representing a stable satisfaction rate (out of a maximum of 5).[[1]](#footnote-2)

Despite numerous analytical, normative, and innovative efforts in **human resource management**, the expected outcomes still lag, particularly in critical areas such as aligning employment with entity personnel needs, resolving the issue of reducing the number of acting senior management posts , reforming the salary system, and establishing a unified information system for human resources management across state bodies, bodies of the autonomous provinces and local self-government units (known as HRMIS). Progress in professional development reform is evident, notably reflected in the high satisfaction levels among users of programmes implemented under the NAPA. The review highlights the imperative for increased efforts in the area of HRM to attain the intended outputs by the Action Plan's implementation deadline.

In **area of service provision**, notable strides have been made, particularly in the area of electronic services, showcasing their pivotal role during the Covid-19 pandemic. Simultaneously, alongside the expansion of electronic services and administrative one-stop-shops, the establishment of physical administrative one-stop-shops (OSS, totalling 55 in the period from 2019 to 2023) has been recognised as a positive practice. However, the lack of clear co-ordination mechanisms in service provision leads to their sporadic implementation. Furthermore, a deficiency exists in establishing a structured system for continuously measuring service user satisfaction.

Regarding the area of **accountability and transparency**, the review acknowledges certain strides toward introducing and reinforcing these principles within the public administration system. It's important to note that several outcomes hold the potential to bolster increased accountability within the public administration. These include delegating responsibility by appointing authorised individuals to handle administrative procedures, fortifying both vertical and horizontal systems of control and supervision within the public administration, and enhancing the ethical standards and integrity of civil servants. Despite these efforts, the review reveals that progress in enhancing public administration's accountability towards end users has been somewhat limited. However, there have been positive strides in transparency. For instance, the implementation of a unique information bulletin system on labour and the ongoing progress in publishing data in a machine-readable format are notable advancements. These positive steps toward transparency have the potential to catalyse further reforms.

In the area of **co-ordination and communication**, the implementation of the PARS AP has significantly advanced the recognition of public administration reform (*“administration tailored for all of us”*), the standardisation of messages, communication on outputs and rights of citizens and the business community. Officials involved, as per surveys and interviews, acknowledge substantial progress. However, they stress the ongoing need for proactive and persistent efforts in informing citizens for a better understanding of the reform and the objectives it strives to attain. The review shows that there is still room for improvement in the area of internal communication within the public administration, as well as in the frequency of meetings, further development of capacity and awareness of the importance of co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation, and the integration of recommendations from the reporting system into the planning system.

***Question 2. What were the main factors that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives? What obstacles have been encountered in the implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 and to what extent and how have they been overcome?***

The review underscores several key internal drivers that have significantly influenced achieved outputs, including the presence of political will, professional staff management, robust internal capacities, and a conducive working environment. Additionally, proactive engagement from institutions, particularly involving young individuals more receptive to change, acts as a catalyst for changes. The normative framework also plays a pivotal role as a catalyst for change. Externally, drivers in the recent period have been multifaceted, encompassing: the European integration process, donor support, an active civil society, and the Republic of Serbia's participation in global initiatives like the Open Government Partnership (OGP). Furthermore, the Covid pandemic has been both a driving force (especially for services) and an obstacle hindering certain reform outputs.

When it comes to obstacles, the review highlights predominantly internal challenges within the system itself. Despite the distinct nuances across various areas of the PAR covered in this review, similar challenges persist throughout. The review did not recognise external obstacles during the interviews and focus groups. However, several internal hurdles were identified: inadequate institutional capacity, both in terms of human and financial resources; insufficient engagement of civil society in the planning and reporting processes, frequent elections and turnover of decision-makers within state administrative bodies emerged as major obstacles; inefficient implementation of existing legal frameworks and a lack of understanding and support among administrative staff.

The lack of a clear vision for reform direction in specific areas and insufficient co-ordination within the system were also identified as significant barriers hindering the realisation of reform outputs.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

Efforts to date in the area of **human resource management** have not yet yielded transformative results, although the analytical activities, development of a normative framework and capacity building form the basis for more ambitious reforms planned by the time the implementation of the Action Plan is finalised.The PAR Strategy significantly streamlined the strategic framework for human resource management, unifying all aspects of development into a comprehensive planning document for the first time. Nevertheless, the observed delays in critical reform measures, such as aligning staff recruitment with actual staff needs, resolving the issue of reducing the number of acting senior management posts, establishing a unified information system for HRM across government bodies and bodies of Local Self-Government (LSG), and executing salary reforms, present challenges requiring immediate attention in the upcoming phase. Moreover, the unresolved matter of competency-based staffing across the entire PAR remains among the most critical issues to be addressed. On the other hand, effective results are achieved in the area of professional development, especially when it comes to connecting this area with the education system, which is currently implemented through support to higher education institutions in the training of personnel for public administration (by organizing and implementing student professional practice programs in public administration - a process that is continuously improved and represents good practice). This ongoing collaboration continuously improves and represents a commendable practice. Consequently, these findings have led to recommendations for further amplifying efforts to meet anticipated outcomes, fostering the PAR advancement in this domain.

Significant strides have been achieved in **service provision**. A notable highlight includes the formulation of a comprehensive strategic framework for public administration reform for the period from 2021-2030. This framework emphasises a more end-user-centric approach, prioritising service delivery. The result of these reform initiatives is especially evident in electronic administration, the development, and optimisation of new and existing services, as well as the integration of quality management into administrative processes. Access to public services, whether physical or electronic, has seen improvements. Yet, there remains room for continued advancement through the establishment of centralised access services, to standardise and harmonise the quality of services provided. These outcomes hold transformative potential, capable of influencing positive shifts in organisational culture and service accessibility. Continuous and intensified efforts are recommended to promote both existing and forthcoming innovative solutions, encompassing electronic and physical services alongside one-stop-shops, so that citizens, businesses and administration are familiar with their rights and opportunities and to change awareness and reduce resistance to change among employees and the general public. Further progress necessitates a persistent focus on simplifying procedures and streamlining processes. This approach not only ensures greater efficiency but also elevates the quality of services offered. Additionally, the ongoing implementation of activities outlined by the PARS AP is crucial in developing and deploying methodologies for measuring end users' satisfaction with services.

Substantial strides have been accomplished in the area of transparency, evident in the refinement of the legal framework governing independent bodies' operations. Moreover, there has been consistent advancement in the publication of data by administrative authorities, presented in a machine-readable (open) format. To leverage the current achievements in transparency—acknowledged as a catalyst for further advancement—it is imperative to expedite the reforms. This involves taking decisive measures to enhance the actions of public authorities, aligning with recommendations from independent state bodies, as well as to prevent abuse of the right of free access to information of public importance.

In the area of **accountability**, while notable progress has been achieved, it remains insufficient to drive significant practical changes. The pace of reforms has lagged behind schedules, necessitating a more intensified approach. In particular, there is a pressing need to establish systemic solutions for managerial accountability and the implementation of performance-based management. The analytical work and enhancements in the legal framework governing the operations of independent state bodies have indeed bolstered accountability. However, a concerning negative trend is observed in the administration's response to the actions of these independent bodies, which is a crucial area necessitating further improvement. Recognising the pivotal significance of establishing the Register of Public Authority Holders in mapping responsibilities within the public administration system, there is a pressing need to intensify efforts to actualise this initiative before the conclusion of the AP implementation period.

Regarding **co-ordination and communication**, the findings underscore a positive impact resulting from activities conducted under the PARS AP in informing citizens about reforms. To maintain this momentum, it is imperative to further evolve these efforts in the upcoming phase to prevent instances where institutions report on certain activities' implementation without referencing the PAR. At the same time, co-ordination mechanisms for public administration reform and communication have been established and are working in practice. These mechanisms include a co-ordination structure for the PARS AP and communication of the reforms, as well as platforms for data input (internal one-stop-shop), analysing and monitoring the reforms (<https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/>), which have proven to be very useful. To further enhance these practices, the proposed recommendations include the continuation of the practice of the current PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 and the planning of co-ordination and communication activities that would operationally monitor the PARS for the period 2026-2030. Moreover, there is a necessity to consolidate the operational plan into an integrated set of communication activities. This transformation would facilitate interactive collaboration between PR services and implementing units, fostering consistent monitoring and communication throughout the planning phases.

It highlights the imperative to bolster the number and capabilities of units tasked with co-ordinating, monitoring, and evaluating reform. The existing co-ordination structures are characterised by transparency and inclusivity, engaging various stakeholders, including civil society organisations. However, there's a need to enhance the frequency of meetings across all levels, incorporating a more action-oriented agenda. Sustaining the commendable practice of reviewing, discussing, and reporting on the progress of consolidated recommendations within the co-ordination meetings is essential.

In terms of internal communication, particular focus should be directed towards planning activities and devising mechanisms for internal messaging, information sharing, and co-ordinating specific communication reform domains. Furthermore, it is crucial to continue and intensify these good practices to promote individual reforms planned in the PAR Strategy or resulting from the implementation of the PAR Strategy, as PAR.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Public Administration and Local Government (hereinafter referred to as: MPALSG) is currently conducting a mid-term review and performance evaluation (hereinafter referred to as: review) of the Action Plan for the period 2021-2025 for the implementation of the Public Administration Reform Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030 (hereinafter referred to as: PARS AP for the period 2021-2025), in the period from January 2021 until June 2023. This review represents an evaluation of the implementation of the AP PAR Strategy for the period 2021-2025 so far, i.e. achievements of the Public Administration Reform (hereinafter: PAR), in the areas (a) human resource management, (b) service delivery and (c) accountability and transparency as well as (d) communication and co-ordination of reform processes, as a cross-cutting task for all thematic areas.

This report points out pivotal information regarding the most important initiatives within the realm of PAR, analyses the success of reforms within the reporting period, and presents key conclusions and recommendations crucial for advancing further in the implementation of reform initiatives.

# 2. Subject of the Review

In April 2021, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted a new Strategy for the Reform of Public Administration in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030 (hereinafter: PARS for the period 2021-2030) and an accompanying Action Plan for its implementation for the period 2021-2025, thus creating a new strategic framework for PAR. PARS and PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 were developed in accordance with the Law on the Planning System of the Republic of Serbia (hereinafter: LPS), which was adopted in 2018. The development of the PARS for the period 2021-2030 was preceded by a comprehensive external evaluation of the previous PAR Strategy adopted in 2014, which resulted in a number of key recommendations for future planning and a report on the lessons learnt from the management of this evaluation.

The new PARS for the period 2021-2030 represents the umbrella public policy document (hereinafter: PPD) in the PAR area, which means that all hierarchically lower PPDs in the thematic area must stem from it and be harmonised with it. The overall objective of the PARS for the period 2021-2030 is: *“further improvement of public administration operations and quality of formulation of public policies in line with the European Principles of Public Administration; delivering high quality services to citizens and businesses as well as professional public administration which will significantly contribute to economic stability and improvement of the standard of living.”*[[2]](#footnote-3)

As can be seen in the Figure 1 in below, the PARS for the period 2021-2030 has eight specific objectives structured around six thematic areas. The PARS AP for the period 2021-2025, on the other hand, defines activities for five specific objectives in three thematic areas, namely (a) human resource management, (b) service delivery and (c) accountability and transparency. These three areas, together with (d) the area of communication and co-ordination of the PARS, which is included in the „operational plan“, are the subject of this review.

Chart . Strategic framework for the Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia



Since this review is based on a theory of change (hereafter: TC) approach, the evaluation team reconstructed the intervention logic (hereafter: IL) for the PARS AP and the underlying assumptions, as a conceptual model of the causal chain from inputs to outputs, outcomes and impact. The IL in Diagram 2 (below) represents a “reconstructed” intervention logic in the areas covered by this review. The reconstructed ILs for each area are presented in Annex 7.

Chart . Reconstructed intervention logic of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

**CONTRIBUTION TO STABILITY AND RAISING LIVING STANDARDS**

**A PROFESSIONAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION THAT CREATES AND GUARANTEES HIGH- QUALITY SERVICES FOR CITIZENS AND BUSINESSES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE EUROPEAN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

IMPACT

Citizens are better informed about PAR

More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of the PAR

The public administration fulfils its tasks more transparently and responsibly

End users are satisfied with the public services provided

State administration and LSGs attract, hire and retain competent, efficient and motivated staff

OUTCOME

с

DIRECT OUTPUTS

Effective coordination, monitoring of measures and activities planned by AP PAR and support from donors

Harmonisation, standardisation and continuous communication of PAR within the public administration

Establishment of a coordination mechanism for the planning, implementation and monitoring of PAR communication

Increasing the visibility and communication about the PAR process and the results achieved

A system for the development, implementation and control of services has been established

Public administration has a higher level of accountability at all levels of government

Transparent publication of data held by the public administration for users

Higher quality management of human resources

Better quality and more efficient work of employees in the state administration

COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PAR STRATEGY

SERVICES

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Improving the staff planning process in the state administration and local self-government

Spreading awareness of the state administration as a desirable employer

Improving the competency framework

Improving the selection and induction process of new employees

Improving the merit-based recruiting process

Improving the career development process in administration

Improving the competency evaluation system for civil servants

Improving the system for efficient human resource management

Improving the work of individuals in position

Improvement of the unique professional development system

Training and professional development of state and LSGs bodies

Improving the legal regulatory framework for professional development in government institutions, local government and public administration

Standardisation of processes and quality systems in the field of professional development in public administration

Strengthening technical (ICT) capacities in the area of professional development

Development of a masterplan model for lifelong professional development in public administration

Standardisation and improvement of the organisation of professional examinations within the state administration system

Cooperation among institutions and special professional organisations responsible for professional development matters in state bodies

Establishment of cooperation with the high educational institution with a view of educating staff for public administration

Definition of the concept of services

Development of new and optimisation of existing services

Increase the human, technical and technological capacity of the public administration to provide services to end users

Establishment of administrative one-stop-shops in LSGs

Improving the quality assurance system of service delivery

Increasing human and technical capacity for service provision

Improving the system for controlling and monitoring the quality of service provision

Collecting data on user satisfaction with services

Raising the awareness of E-services

Development of managerial accountability in the public administration bodies

Strengthening the ability of public administration managers to apply the principles of managerial accountability

Improving mechanisms and capacities for management according to the performance of public management bodies

Improving ethical standards and mechanisms for monitoring the ethical behaviour of public officials

Strengthening the ability of public administration officials to promote the transparency of their work

Preparation and adoption of national action plans in the framework of RS participation in the OGP

Improving the regulatory framework to enhance accountability and transparency in the activities of public administration entities

Strengthening the capacities of PABs and other competent authorities (administrative inspection) for supervision over the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance

Strengthening human and technical capacities for the communication about the PAR

Adoption of annual operational plans for PAR communication and quarterly and annual reports on the implementation of the operational plans

Increased technical capacity through the establishment and functioning of the information board as an internal communication tool

The findings of the annual public opinion survey among civil servants about information on the process and results of the PAR are available.

Map of capacities of SABs and LSGs for communicating PAR available

Adoption of standards for PAR communication

Adoption and application of guidelines for the creation and maintenance of profiles of SABs and LSGUs in social networks

Strengthen the human capacity of SAB managers, PRs and media to communicate and report on PAR and outputs attained

Raised awareness of citizens and businesses on their rights and PAR benefits

The findings of the annual public opinion survey on the public's knowledge of the PAR process and results are available

Available increased capacities of PR officers and organisational units for HRM and SAB, LSGUs on the importance, methods, channels and instruments of interdepartmental and internal communication of the RAP public opinion research about the level of public information regarding the PAR process and outputs

ACTIVITIES

donor funds - planned 1,000,605.81

donors funds - realised 357,998.49

budget funds - planned 1,100,339.06

donors funds - realised 188,057.70

* Human resources (in numbers and per qualifications)
* Technical capacities
* Clear definition of public administration
* Recognising PAR as a priority
* Commitment of institutions and individuals to participate in the activities
* Political support for the reform activities

INPUT RESOURCES

Chart . Key Assumptions

* Availability of financial resources
* Human resources (numerical and professional)
* A clear definition of public administration
* Recognising the PAR as a priority
* Commitment of institutions and individuals to participate in activities
* Political support for reform outputs
* Absence of disruptive events (elections, natural disasters and disasters, or other types of disruptions)
* Absence of resistance to change
* Recognising the PAR as a priority
* Political and administrative stability
* Minimal disasters and other types of disruption
* Stable and continuous economy
* Human resources (numerical and professional)
* A clear definition of public administration
* Recognising the PAR as a priority
* Political support for the reform outputs
* Allocation of the necessary and stable financial and human resources by the authorities for the implementation of the new laws, mechanisms, knowledge and capacities
* Commitment to translate the acquired knowledge and capacities into accessible and sustainable services that meet the needs of users
* Absence of disruptive events (elections, natural disasters and disasters, or other types of disruptions)
* Absence of resistance to change (administration, citizens, business entities)

KEY ASSUMPTIONS (**Inputs –** activities – outputs))

KEY ASSUMPTIONS (outputs - outcomes)

KEY ASSUMPTIONS   
(outcomes – effect)

# 3. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE of the Mid-term review

## 3.1 Main Objective of the Review

The review has a formative character[[3]](#footnote-4) and, as already mentioned, aims to review the results of the current implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025, as well as to identify current obstacles and possible measures to overcome them and to provide recommendations for the next steps in the implementation of Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia. Consequently, the review seeks to provide an impartial assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of different elements of the reform in these domains. Where deemed necessary, it aims to offer recommendations for corrective measures within the implementation of the Action Plan. Additionally, it intends to propose suggestions for devising a new PARS AP for the period 2026-2030. The review focuses on two pivotal concerns, elaborated upon in detail within the evaluation matrix outlined in Annex 2 of this Report.

This review emerges from collaborative efforts by a mixed review team (hereinafter: the Team) comprised of two representatives from MPALSG and two independent evaluation experts. Therefore, this review signifies an intersection between self-assessment and external review. The added value of this approach lies in its ability to merge external perspectives with internal insights into reforms and outcomes. Additionally, it serves to reinforce evaluation capacities within MPALSG itself.

The direct beneficiaries of the findings and recommendations of this review are several internal and external stakeholders, whose representatives are members of the Interministerial Project Group for Professional Affairs for the co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation process of the Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2025 (hereinafter: IMPG). The primary beneficiary is MPALSG, which will benefit from an objective evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of the various elements of the reform, as well as insights into the further resolution of possible difficulties at the system level in order to accelerate the ongoing implementation of the reform. Secondary beneficiaries are government administrative bodies (hereafter: SABs), civil society organisations (hereafter: CSOs), development partners and donors. The review will help these target groups and stakeholders to be informed about the progress of the reform and to contribute to the next steps of the reform based on adequate information.

## 3.2 Scope of the Review

**Thematic scope:** the review covers the following areas of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025: the area of human resource management, the area of services and the area of accountability and transparency. These areas proved to be particularly important in the initial phase of the review. In addition, an overview of the outputs in the area of PAR communication and co-ordination will also be included and reviewed as important to the overall review of the performance of the PARS AP to date. In this review, the outputs are assessed at the level of activities, performance and transformation potential, as provided for in the Terms of Reference and detailed in the logic of the intervention (see Chart 2). The assessment of transformation potential is made based on data collected by MPALSG, as well as statistics on the Republic of Serbia, SIGMA reports, and other sources.

**Time period:** the timeline for the analyses spans from January 2021 to June 2023.

# 4. METHODOLOGY

This mid-term review is based on a theory-based approach in which the main focus of the review is on understanding the causes and consequences of the individual measures and the desired outcomes of the reform initiatives. The theoretical approach aims to understand what was successful and why it was (not) successful.

As the interventions within the PAR that fall within the scope of this review were diverse and addressed systemic issues in three areas (the area of human resource management, the area of service delivery and the area of accountability and transparency), the review utilises a systemic approach that provides the opportunity to systematically assess all three areas. This approach facilitated an analysis of activities and outcomes within the specified areas. It allowed for an assessment of both internal and external factors, their interplay, complexity, and their influence on the effectiveness of intended outcomes and impacts. The analysis was conducted following the approaches and principles of **affirmative research[[4]](#footnote-5)**, **participatory research, and prioritising the usability of analysis outcomes[[5]](#footnote-6)**, as well as **ethical standards**, guidelines and internationally recognised codes of conduct.

This mid-term review uses a mixed methods approach, i.e. a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods from different sources, as explained below:

**Existing quantitative information** gather from multiple sources, include national data on the implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025, as well as specific data in the context of monitoring reform activities, outputs and effects and their respective indicators.

**The primary quantitative information** was collected through two online surveys conducted as part of the review, namely 1) a survey for administration bodies and 2) a survey for civil society organisations that are members of the WeBER platform. The questionnaires for the online surveys can be found in Annex 13.

**Primary qualitative information**, including:

* Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders from central-level institutions (the Government, MPALSG, and key institutions involved in PAR implementation); then with external stakeholders (institutions, subject matter experts in public administration, donors, and development partners. (Refer to Annex 11 for a comprehensive list of interviewed institutions and organisations).
* Additionally, focus groups were convened with civil society organisations.

Furthermore, consultations with stakeholders took the form of interviews and focus groups, primarily aimed at delving into the qualitative aspects of reform components within the scope of this review. The team will undertake purposive sampling in the course of the interviews, with key stakeholders selected in relation to the areas covered by the review (see list in Annex 11). A total of 33 individuals participated in the consultations, comprising 29 individuals (25 women, 4 men) engaged through interviews and 4 individuals (1 woman, 3 men) in focus groups.

Regarding the online surveys (quantitative data), the sampling was comprehensive. Questionnaires were disseminated across the administrative bodies' network and among civil society organisations affiliated with the WeBER platform. For the administration survey, 25,400 employees received the questionnaire, resulting in 711 responses from administrative body representatives. Similarly, the civil society organisations' survey was distributed to all member organisations of the WeBER platform, garnering responses from 11 representatives. To maintain confidentiality, the survey was conducted anonymously (for further details on the survey refer to in Annexes 9 and 10).

## Data Analysis

Analysis on the key areas of reform interventions and their impact was made through descriptive and comparative quantitative analysis, thematic narrative analysis, qualitative iterative data analysis and contribution analysis. The data was triangulated to the extent possible. The review matrix (Appendix 2) will serve as a framework for data analysis and synthesis.

## Limitations of the Review

The review was subject to the following limitations, which are listed in Table 1.

*Table 1*. *Risks and risk mitigation strategies*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Risk (probability) | Possible impact | Prevention and mitigation measures |
| *Respondents are unwilling to share their true views or tend to give biased and uncritical answers (medium)* | High | The interview and focus group team comprised independent experts, distinct from civil servants, ensuring objectivity in the responses. The surveys maintained complete anonymity, and the data derived from these surveys was exclusively analysed by independent entities |
| *Inconclusive evidence on some issues in the analysis, particularly in relation to the contributions and transformative potential of reforms in the areas covered by this analysis (medium)* | High | In data collection, efforts were made to gather evidence from internal documents sourced from administrative authorities, CSOs, as well as international and regional documents. Additionally, specific evidence was derived from opinion polls or surveys reflecting the attitudes of civil servants. |
| *Low survey response rate (high)* | Medium | The survey for public administration was distributed by MPALSG, and the WeBER project handled the distribution for civil society. However, the survey elicited a limited response from participants. Multiple reminders regarding the survey were sent out. |

# 5. KEY FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW

***Question 1. To what extent will the specific outputs of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 be achieved/likely to be achieved?***

At a global level, the Republic of Serbia demonstrates noticeable progress in line with World Bank standards. In 2022, the effectiveness (efficiency) of its public administration reached 57.08, showcasing improvement compared to 2020's 51.43. (The ranking value spans from 0 to 100, where a higher value indicates better performance.)[[6]](#footnote-7)Citizens' perceptions remain consistent, particularly concerning administrative services, especially electronic services, streamlined administrative procedures, and the introduction of clearer administrative processes, all contributing to a more citizen-centric public administration overall. Regarding overall satisfaction among citizens and businesses with the services offered, data from 2022 indicates a steady trend, maintaining the satisfaction level at 4 out of a maximum score of 5, consistent with the 2020 level.[[7]](#footnote-8)

During the ongoing implementation of the Action Plan to **improve human resource management** by attracting, recruiting and retaining competent, efficient and motivated personnel, numerous analytical, normative and innovative activities have been undertaken. However concrete results are still lacking, especially in measures such as recruitment in accordance with the staff needs of the authorities, resolving the issue of reducing the number of acting senior management posts, implementing the reform of the salary system and establishing a unified information system for HRM in state authorities and authorities of autonomous provinces and LSGs (so-called HRMIS). Reforms in the area of professional development are progressing, as evidenced by the high level of user satisfaction with the programmes implemented within the NAPA. In the coming period, additional efforts will be required to achieve the planned results by the end of the implementation period of the Action Plan.

The review confirmed that significant progress has been made in the implementation of the PARS AP in the area of **service delivery**. The service delivery policy and the focus on end users were introduced for the first time in the PAR Strategy for the period from 2021-2030. The greatest successes continue to be in the area of developing electronic services, which have also been confirmed under the conditions of the Covid pandemic. Serbia has achieved the highest e-Participation index within the UN countries (RS is in 15th place, it has improved by 26 places) and is at the top of the world in the use of electronic services. At the same time, the opening of physical, one-stop shops - OSSs - has been a priority – a total of 55 in the period 2019-2023, covering one third of the local self-government units and the territory of RS and giving citizens and businesses the opportunity to go to one place and submit multiple applications, thus realising the principle of “*once only*”, i.e. contributing to the overall accessibility of administration. The total 400 existing administrative procedures for business were optimised, 21 procedures were abolished, resulting in annual savings of 32 million euros for the economy. Quality management is being introduced into the administration through the European model of the Common Assessment Framework - CAF. It can have a transformative potential on the organisational culture of the administration if the coverage of institutions (currently eight) is increased. In the area of the improved system for controlling and monitoring of the quality of service provision, it was noted that there is a lack of clear co-ordination mechanisms in the area of service provision, which leads to their unsystematic application. A lack of activities to establish a system for continuous measurement of service user satisfaction was identified. The need for continuity in the promotion of e-Services and a better understanding of the opportunities offered by e- services was emphasised.

As regards the area of **accountability and transparency**, the review has shown that certain steps are being taken towards the introduction and/or strengthening of these principles within the public administration system. However, the results in practice are not yet sufficient to achieve significant progress and are often read through formal regulations rather than the accompanying practical application. In other words, the performance of the implementation of the PARS AP in this area has so far been limited, especially in the domain of accountability, while in the area of transparency there have been certain positive developments and results that have the potential to encourage further reforms (e.g. the implementation of a unique information bulletin system on labour and the ongoing progress in publishing data in a machine-readable format).

In the area of co-ordination and communication, the activities carried out through the implementation of the PARS AP have promoted the recognition of the public administration reform (*Administration tailored to all of us*), the standardisation of messages, communication on the results and rights of citizens and businesses (constant growth in the number of citizens who have heard and know about public administration reform - 24% of respondents in 2020, 31% in 2022). As a result, the number of citizens who are satisfied with the results of the reform is also increasing (as they know how to exercise their rights more easily, save money and time, etc.). The officials surveyed and interviewed believe that work in this area should continue to be proactive and persistent so that citizens are better informed, understand the reform and know what the reform is trying to achieve.

The documentation shows that there is room for improvement in the area of internal communication within the public administration (3.8 out of a possible 5 points in 2022), which was also confirmed by the interviews.

Structures have been created to co-ordinate the implementation of the PARS AP and the communication of the PARS, as well as platforms for data input (internal UIS), analysis and monitoring (<https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/>). Implementation reports are prepared, discussed and adopted, although the level of interest and involvement in these processes varies, which affects the final results of monitoring. The results of the interviews indicate that co-ordination structures could be improved to achieve more meaningful interaction, joint activities and synergies. The frequency of meetings, further development of capacity and awareness of the importance of co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation and the integration of recommendations from reporting into the planning system also need improvement, which was confirmed by the interviews.

## 5.1 Human resource management

Targets 2, 3 and 4 PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 contain the thematic part of Human Resource Management, and the desired end result in this area is for the government administration and LSGs to attract, hire and retain competent, efficient and motivated personnel. At the level of direct outputs defined by the reconstructed intervention logic, it is expected that the planned reforms will contribute to better human resource management and better and more efficient work of the employees in the government administration (*Diagram 2*).

Based on this, numerous activities have been initiated and/or implemented so far as part of the implementation of the PARS AP and most outputs have been achieved at the level of the measures planned in the area of personnel development (in 2022, 9 out of 12 indicators were achieved, i.e. 75%; in 2021, 11 out of 13 indicators, i.e. 85%).

**However, the analysis has shown that reforms in the field of professional development are progressing more efficiently, while progress in improving the recruitment process in public administration and building an efficient career management system is slower and requires systemic support to achieve more concrete results in practice by the time the Action Plan ends.**  The above findings are particularly evident in the example of some particularly significant outputs that are expected in this area, namely: recruitment of staff based on the expressed staffing needs of the institution; filling of vacancies of persons in the position according to the competency framework (reduction in the number of persons in the position in acting capacity); implementation of the public sector payroll system reform; establishment of the human resource management information system in government institutions and AP and LSG institutions and its linkage with other information systems that collect data on employees in state bodies. The analysis has shown that continuous efforts are being made in relation to all these issues, mainly through analytical work, the development of the normative framework and capacity building.[[8]](#footnote-9) However there are still no definitive outputs that would significantly improve the current situation. On the other hand, as mentioned above, **the segment of professional development of employees in the administrations is continuously developing and registers a high level of user satisfaction**, which has also been confirmed by the field research that corroborates the limited outputs obtained so far in the field of HRM: most of the civil servants who participated in the *online* survey believe that there is no progress in attracting, recruiting and retaining competent, efficient and motivated personnel by the state administration and LSGs (32.41%) or that progress has been made to a lesser extent (30.8%). The survey, which was aimed at civil society organisations, showed identical results - the majority believe that there has been no progress, while the rest of the respondents believe that progress has been made to a lesser extent.[[9]](#footnote-10)

Regarding **the improvement of the recruitment process in the public administration** as an important segment of quality human resource management, analytical activities have been carried out.[[10]](#footnote-11) However, the implementation of concrete results that should contribute to employment in line with the *agency's human resource* needs is delayed. The piloting of the innovative personnel planning methodology in 4 state administration bodies has been completed,but the personnel plan of the state administration bodies for 2024, as envisaged in the PARS AP, has not yet been adopted. As a result, the percentage of employees whose positions are filled (through internal and public competitions and recruitment on the internal labour market) is still very low in relation to the total number of employees whose employment is provided for in the staffing plans and is far below the planned values (year 2021 - 25% target value, 14% realised value; year 2022 - 30% target value, 18.7% realised value). This shows that there is still much room for improvement in this area. *Activities* have been undertaken in order to attract young people and *promote the state administration as a desirable employer* through programs, the internet community and virtual fairs of student professional practice organized and implemented by the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government within the framework of measures and activities aimed at connecting the new professional development system with the education system, as well as through the promotion of HRMS using innovative methods. The interviews confirmed the importance of past efforts, but also recommended analysing their concrete results in the future (e.g. how many young people were hired after the student internship or how the mentioned activities contributed to the overall goal of building the state administration as a desirable employer).

Following the introduction of the competency system in the state administration in 2019, the *Competency framework for staff in AP and LSG bodies* was developed and integrated into the normative framework, which was recognised in interviews as a good step towards standardising the civil servant system at all levels. However, the interviews suggest that full implementation still requires major efforts to ensure that the public administration functions fully in line with competences, particularly in the area of transparency and fairness of the merit-based recruitment and promotion process. The problems of excessive bureaucratisation and competition procedures, which in practice do not always lead to the desired results, have also been identified. The analysis has shown that the process of *filling posts according to the competency framework is still proceeding with difficulties and with results below the planned level*. Although some progress has been made - the percentage of positions filled by people in appointed positions in line with the competency framework increased from 34% (2020), over 40% (2021) to 46% (2022) - the results are still well below the planned level (60% was planned for 2022). Also, the analytical activities that should suggest further directions for solving a large number of persons discharging public offices in acting capacity are still underway,[[11]](#footnote-12) so the planned change in the normative framework, in accordance with the proposal for support measures, was omitted.

Regarding the development of an **effective career management system in practice**, the analysis has shown that there are no significant results. As in the previous case, it should be noted that a number of analytical steps have been taken, as well as the implementation of the programme to strengthen the capacity of human resources departments in the state administration, but there are no concrete results. The information system for HRM in the state authorities and authorities of the AP and LSGs has not yet been established, the implementation of the reform of the public sector salary system has been postponed until 2025, as well as the implementation of the policy on the management of civil servants in appointed positions in a normative framework, which has not yet begun. The interviews conducted for the purpose of this review have shown that the career management system has not yet made the expected progress, mainly because a significant part of these activities is still under the control of superiors, which often results in the needs of civil servants not being met. In particular, it was pointed out in the interviews that the system for evaluating the work performance of civil servants on the basis of competences has not led to the desired results - it is bureaucratically oriented, not objective, it is calculated in the evaluation, as the evaluation is related to merit (salary levels) rather than to development and personal advancement.

The analysis shows that the area of **professional development and its evolution achieves good results**, through continuous development and progress in all segments of the unique system of professional development in the public administration that was previously established. As part of the implementation of the PARS AP to date, an analysis of the effects of the current normative framework has been carried out, the development of a distance learning platform has been completed, with the application of multimedia and interactive online learning methods, work on the development and implementation of innovative training programs has been continued, and a training programme tailored to the needs of interns and persons training for independent work in their profession has been developed. The National Academy of Public Administration has intensified the implementation of annual professional development programs for civil servants and employees in LGUs, both in executive and managerial positions, which resulted in an increase in the number of conducted trainings and participants, as well as a high degree of fulfilment of their expectations, especially those in which innovative forms and methods of professional development were used. This is supported by the fact that in the period January 2021 - June 2023, 1497 trainings were held, with 55087 participants, which is 55.8% of the total number of trainings held and 61.2% of the total number of participants since 2018, when a central institution for professional training in the public administration was established. The interviews conducted have shown that there are plans for more active work on the implementation of procedures related to the evaluation of implemented training programs.. The most important results in this area include *the establishment and continuous development of cooperation with higher education institutions* for the purpose of supporting the training/additional training of staff for public administration. Directly related to this is the realization of the aforementioned activities aimed at promoting public administration as a desirable employer, through the organization of annual fairs "Student professional practice in public administration" that were realized in 2021 and 2022 via a specially developed *online* platform, while the preparations are underway for the third meeting (planned for 15 November 2023).[[12]](#footnote-13) Confirmation of the importance of these activities for the overall strengthening of administrative capacities, which are one of the criteria for assessing the state's readiness to become a member of the European Union, is also reflected in the special award for the Empowerment and Employment of Youth, which the Student Professional Practice in the Public Administration Fair 2021/2022 received from the Regional School for Public Administration (ReSPA) and OECD/SIGMA, in competition with more than 50 projects from administrations from the Western Balkans. The analysis indicates that no evaluation of the completed professional practice has been carried out so far, but it is planned to be introduced as a regular activity by this year's cooperation program signed with five state universities.

Interviews conducted as part of the analysis indicated that stronger stimulation of employees in state bodies and bodies of local self-government units for professional development could be a greater affirmation of the career model.

## In addition to the above, it should be noted that a set of implemented activities which resulted in the analysis of the existing normative framework and practice, as well as the proposal of recommendations, has created a good starting point for the reform of professional examinations in the state administration, which until now has never been part of a strategically planned process.5.2 Services

The analysis confirmed that **significant progress has been made in the implementation of the PARS AP in the area of** **service delivery**.The service delivery policy and the focus on end users were first introduced in the **PAR Strategy for the period 2021-2030**. This was the first time that a public policy in this area was designed, within which **new services were to be developed, existing ones optimised, human capacities strengthened and the control and monitoring of the public service delivery policy introduced**). The analysis shows that the greatest successes are still in the area of **e-Service development**, which was also confirmed in the conditions of the Covid pandemic, when the transformation of the administration's work through digitalisation led to a rapid adaptation to the conditions of limited freedom of movement and possibilities of service provision. As a result of the efforts, the Republic of Serbia is the winner of the most awards for the Western Balkans in 2020, awarded by RESPA and OECD/ SIGMA in the field of public administration reform with a special focus on the response to the Covid pandemic. Serbia received four out of 11 awards: two in the field of e-Government, one in the field of economy and one in the e-health category, namely for improving service delivery during the pandemic, the ability to adapt to the context and ensure continuity (of service delivery), providing communication and information mechanisms, establishing control mechanisms and monitoring the spread of infection, ensuring business continuity during the crisis thanks to tools such as the e-market and the contact centre e-inspector.[[13]](#footnote-14)

As far as e-Government and e-Services are concerned, the results of this study show that the Republic of Serbia is well positioned in the international context. According to the United Nations e-Government Development Index, it ranks 40th out of 193 countries in 2022 (58th in 2020)[[14]](#footnote-15), i.e. it belongs to the group of countries with a high e-Government development index of 0.82 out of a maximum of 1.[[15]](#footnote-16) At the same time, Serbia has achieved the highest e-Participation index to date (RS has improved by 26 places and is currently in 15th place)[[16]](#footnote-17), which means that it is among the world leaders in the use of electronic services. Also, according to the World Bank's GovTech Maturity Index (GTMI) for 2022, which measures digital transformation in the public sector, the Republic of Serbia is among the leading countries in this area, along with 62 other countries.[[17]](#footnote-18) In 2022, the number of services on the e-Government portal increased significantly (the number of realised services on the portal is 7,089,423 for 2022, which is a significant increase compared to 2021, when it was 2,253,547), 340 services are available to users of the e-Government portal (G2G, G2B, G2C), 80% of which belong to the fourth stage of development.[[18]](#footnote-19) The analysis of the Portal shows that there are no first or second level of sophistication of services on the Portal (e.g. only downloadable forms or only information). All services on the Portal correspond to level 3, 4 or 5. Some services are fully automated, such as the e-Baby service[[19]](#footnote-20), which is available in maternity clinics without the need to contact an institution. As for the availability of services, this has improved recently thanks to the increased number of digitally available services and electronic payment for administrative services via the e-Government portal.

In addition to the eGovernment Portal, through which services are available at the 3rd, 4th or 5th level of sophistication, the Government has established the Portal of the Registry of Administrative Procedures, where all public administration services are available in one place - 3082 services (G2B, G2C) on the second level of digital sophistication. Also, connections for digital processing at the 3rd, 4th or 5th level of digital sophistication have been enabled for 837 services on the Portal, which enables them to be launched from one Portal.

Simultaneously, alongside the expansion of electronic services and administrative one-stop-shop services, the establishment of **physical administrative one-stop-shops**, totalling 55 in the period from 2019 to 2023, ensuring the coverage of one-third of the local government units in the RS.[[20]](#footnote-21) One-stop-shops enable citizens and companies to submit multiple applications in one place and to implement the “once-only” principle and contributes to the accessibility of the administration. In addition to one-stop-shops, two IT access centres of the SKIP Centre were opened in Belgrade <http://skipcentar.rs/sr_RS/> and Niš and two state centres were handed over in Belgrade and Kragujevac.

At the same time, **the existing procedures** were **optimised** by the reform.[[21]](#footnote-22) Through the Programme e-Paper, a total of 400 existing administrative procedures for business were optimised, 21 procedures were abolished, resulting in annual savings of 32 million euros for the economy, but also in development of the measurement of user’s satisfaction by allowing every user to evaluate the services provided by this portal[[22]](#footnote-23)

Through specialised training on customer journey mapping and creative design of user-oriented public services through *design thinking* principles and tools,[[23]](#footnote-24) digitalisation of the administration, and **introduction of quality management** in the administration (European model of the Common Assessment Framework - CAF),[[24]](#footnote-25) human capacity and skills of civil servants have been improved.

In the area of **improving the system for controlling and monitoring the quality of service provision**, the development of an analytical basis for service provision was co-ordinated,[[25]](#footnote-26) which should serve for the development of regulations to define and control the application of service standards in order to standardise the application of all services, regardless of where they are provided. This review has indicated that there is a lack of clear co-ordination mechanisms in the area of service provision, which leads to their unsystematic application. A lack of activities to establish a system for continuous measurement of service-user satisfaction was identified. The recommendation is to keep continuity in the promotion of e-Services with a view of better understanding of the opportunities they offer

## 5.3 Accountability and transparency

The thematic area of accountability and transparency, covered under specific objective 6 of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025, includes activities to contribute to a more transparent and accountable exercise of responsibilities by the public administration, as defined as the ultimate goal in the revised theory of change. Based on the reconstructed intervention logic, the targeted outputs in this area include a higher level of accountability at all levels of government and transparent publication of data held by the public administration (*Diagram 2*).

In general, the analysis carried out has shown that the current implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 has achieved limited outputs in terms of improving the accountability and transparency of the public administration towards end users, with better performance in the area of transparency. The analysis of the relevant documentation and the field research conducted show that in the observed area, reforms are implemented much slower than planned, especially in the area of accountability, while the improvement of the legal framework is generally not accompanied by adequate implementation and results in practice.The analysis shows that an example of the above is the fact that although the legal framework in the area of access to information of public importance and the scope of competence of the Ombudsman have been improved, the practice of administrative action according to the enactment of independent bodies still varies greatly and the observed progress indicators point to the existence of a negative trend. These findings are contained in relevant reports, such as the OECD/SIGMA report for Serbia from 2021,[[26]](#footnote-27) the annual reports of the European Commission on the progress of the Republic of Serbia in the last two years,[[27]](#footnote-28)[[28]](#footnote-29) as well as the annual reports[[29]](#footnote-30) of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection and the Ombudsman.[[30]](#footnote-31) The results of the survey also confirm the aforementioned findings - on the response scale of significant progress/solid progress/little progress/no progress, the majority of civil servants who participated in the online survey believe that solid progress (36.99%) or little progress (31.29%) has been made when it comes to more transparent and accountable work of their institutions, while the majority of civil society organisations believe that little progress has been made when it comes to more transparent and accountable performance of tasks by the public administration.[[31]](#footnote-32)

With regard to **raising the level of accountability in the public administration**, the analysis shows that despite some steps, such as the preparation of a comprehensive situation analysis and the formation of the government's working group on leadership accountability in the public administration,[[32]](#footnote-33) as well as the process initiated to strengthen the capacity of managers, *concrete results in the area of leadership accountability and performance management are still pending*. Guidelines with a roadmap for the further development of managerial accountability (including performance management), the development of which was assessed in the interviews as crucial for further reforms, are still being reviewed and finalised. The findings from the document review and interviews also indicate that work has not yet begun on the establishment of the records of public authority holders , another important activity in this area. The interviews confirmed the previous findings and emphasised the importance of the reforms in the areas mentioned, but also pointed out their complexity and the need to look at all aspects in detail, as these are systemic changes.

Similar findings apply to *the segment of the improvement of ethical standards and mechanisms to monitor the implementation of rules for the ethical behaviour of* public officials. Despite conducting specific analytical tasks, such as reviewing the content of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants and evaluating data collection and reporting procedures,[[33]](#footnote-34) and actively progressing with the study on incorporating ethics and integrity officers into the Republic of Serbia's public administration, the awaited implementation of a pilot project[[34]](#footnote-35), on which subsequent systemic advancements in this domain hinge, remains pending. Respondents from the ranks of civil servants who participated in the *online* survey believe that the results achieved so far in terms of introducing managerial accountability, performance management and improving ethical standards have only contributed to a certain extent to improving the functioning and capacity of their institutions.[[35]](#footnote-36)

Such attitudes confirm the limited impact of the reforms, considering the response scale offered - completely/mostly/somewhat/not at all/I am not aware.[[36]](#footnote-37) The survey addressed to civil society has shown that most civil society organisations are not sufficiently familiar with the reforms in the area of managerial accountability and performance-based management that have been implemented in the period from 2021 to date, while they are somewhat familiar with the development of an ethical infrastructure.[[37]](#footnote-38) Finally, despite the limited scope of the reforms to date, it is important to note that *there are several outcomes that have the potential* to lead to greater accountability of the public administration, such as: delegation of responsibility through the appointment of authorised representatives to conduct administrative procedures and handle administrative matters - the percentage of bodies that have appointed authorised representatives exceeds the target values many times over; taking into account the objectives outlined in the PARS AP for implemented government programmes in the development of medium-term plans of state administration bodies and thus bolstering both the vertical and horizontal system of controlling and monitoring public administration work; enhancing the ethical standards and integrity of employees within the state administration by building their capacity.

Regarding the intended **enhancement of public administration transparency**, the analysis indicates **considerable progress achieved thus** far. This progress primarily stems from enhancing the legal framework governing independent bodies' operations. Additionally, ongoing advancements in administrative bodies' consistent publication of data in a machine-readable (open) format have contributed to these positive outcomes. Normative measures to improve accountability and transparency in the work of public authorities have been successfully implemented through the adoption of amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance[[38]](#footnote-39) and the new Law on the Ombudsman.[[39]](#footnote-40) Among the *attained outputs that hold significant potential for advancing transparency further*, the introduction of the unified information system for work-related information booklets stands out. This system commenced operations in February 2022, facilitating the accessibility of relevant labour information in a singular location within public authorities. Another important output is the start of the process of strengthening the Commissioner's capacity for free access to information of public importance and the protection of personal data by opening regional offices of the Commissioner in Novi Sad and Niš (soon also in Kragujevac) and authorising the recruitment of new officials. Another potential for the further development of proactive transparency, identified both through the analysis of documentation and interviews, is the aforementioned “opening of data”, under which the number of administrative authorities publishing their data on the Open Data Portal is constantly increasing - with 45 (2019), over 83 (2021), up to 95 (2022).[[40]](#footnote-41) By the conclusion of July 2023, the Portal had published 2,198 data sets, marking a substantial increase compared to the year-end count of 2020, which was five times fewer.[[41]](#footnote-42) However, despite these advancements observed, a comprehensive review of documentation highlighted *substantial room for enhancing public administration actions in alignment with regulations governing the work of independent state bodies*. This was further corroborated by interviews. Even though the legal framework underwent enhancements in 2021 aimed at fostering heightened accountability and transparency of public authorities toward citizens, relevant data indicate *a significant deviation between practice and the normative framework and objectives set*. Notably, the percentage of compliance with the enactments of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and the Personal Data Protection, as well as the Ombudsman, has been declining. Furthermore, interviews emphasised the issue of the misuse of the right to access information of public importance, necessitating an urgent and appropriate resolution. The majority of civil servants who completed the *online* survey believe that the results so far in the area of strengthening the capacity of administrative officials to improve public access in their work (for opening data and producing information about the work) and improving the application and monitoring of the implementation of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance[[42]](#footnote-43) have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of their institutions. On the other hand, when questioned about their evaluation of the changes in institutional transparency and accountability from 2021 to 2023, a majority of civil society organisations indicated either stagnation or a deterioration in the situation. An equal number of respondents provided both of these responses.[[43]](#footnote-44)

Ultimately, when reviewing the attained results and the level of execution of the Action Plan concerning accountability and transparency, it is crucial to acknowledge that “some aspects within this thematic domain are specifically overseen by the revised Action Plan for Negotiating Chapter 23, the Judicial Development Strategy for 2020-2025, and the Public Financial Management Reform Programme,”[[44]](#footnote-45) the effects of which are not the subject of this analysis. In this sense, one should not rule out the possibility that additional results were achieved by the implementation of the aforementioned planning documents, which of course cannot be confirmed by this analysis.

## 5.4 Communication and co-ordination

The analysis indicates that the activities carried out through the implementation of the PARS AP have promoted the recognition of the public administration reform (*Administration tailored to all of us*), the standardisation of messages, and communication on the results and rights of citizens and businesses (constant growth in the number of citizens who have heard and know about public administration reform - 24% of respondents in 2020, 31% in 2022). Information obtained from both document analysis and fieldwork highlight a consequential increase in the number of citizens who are satisfied with the results of the reform (as they know how to exercise their rights more effectively, save money and time, etc.). However, the officials surveyed and interviewed emphasised that there is room for further proactive and persistent work to ensure that citizens are better informed, understand the reform and know what the reform is intended to achieve.

The documentation shows that there is still room for improvement in the area of internal communication within the public administration (3.8 out of a possible 5 points in 2022),[[45]](#footnote-46) which was also confirmed by the interviews.

Structures were set up to co-ordinate the implementation of the PARS AP and the communication of the PARS as well as platforms for data input (internal UIS), analysis and monitoring (<https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/>). The review shows that implementation reports are produced, discussed and adopted, although the results indicate that there are varying levels of interest and participation in these processes, which affects the final impact of monitoring. The representatives of state authorities and civil society interviewed emphasise that the co-ordination structures need to be improved in order to achieve greater substantive interaction, joint activities and synergies. The frequency of meetings, further development of capacity and awareness of the importance of co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation and the integration of recommendations from reporting into the planning system also need improvement, which was confirmed by the interviews.

At the results level, in the area of **effective co-ordination and monitoring of the measures and activities planned by the PARS AP**, it was envisaged to increase the human and technical capacities for co-ordination and the area of monitoring and evaluation of the PARS, to establish co-ordination at administrative and political level, to carry out a *mid-term* review of the PAR Strategy and to establish a medium-term framework for PAR expenditure and to review this framework in the future. The review shows that the latest Rulebook on the internal organisation and systematisation of the MPALSG provides for an increase in staff from 2023[[46]](#footnote-47) until 2025, while the number of executive officials actually employed in the period 2021-2023 remains the same, except in the Department of Public Relations, which was created in 2020 and where there is a shift in the period observed. In recent years, training has been organised for employees to improve their ability to perform co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tasks and communicate reforms (see Annex 6).

The review indicates that co-ordination is established across administrative and political levels through the PAR Council at the political level, an Inter-ministerial project group at an administrative level, and an operational-level PAR group within MPALSG. Regular reports are generated and deliberated upon, though there's room for improvement in meeting frequency and fostering greater synergy among these entities.

*The mid-term* review of the PARS AP, initiated as planned in 2023, is currently underway as a combined evaluation aimed at enhancing monitoring and evaluation capabilities. In accordance with the Law on the Planning System, the evaluation (this document) is terminologically referred to as the analysis or assessment of the impact of the PPD. The evaluation reference group is the IMPG, ensuring the participation of all its members, including both public authorities and civil society organisations.

The Law on the Planning System[[47]](#footnote-48) and the Decree on the Methodology for the Preparation of Medium-Term Plans[[48]](#footnote-49) mandate the creation of medium-term plans by institutions, along with their corresponding medium-term expenditure framework. As an illustration, MPALSG consistently releases medium-term work plans accompanied by expenditure frameworks on website https://mduls.gov.rs/javnost-u-radu/budzet-ministarstva (in 2023, MPALSG fulfilled the legal obligation by publishing the fourth consecutive plan). Conversely, there is no national legal obligation to prepare medium-term expenditure frameworks for the sector, as defined in the context of European integration, covering public administration reform and public finance management. In order to be able to report within the framework of EU funding, medium-term expenditure frameworks are also drawn up for the aforementioned sector, so that in April 2022, the Public Administration Reform Sector Medium Term Expenditure Framework - PAR sector MTEF - was prepared, and the finalisation of the Public Administration Medium Term Expenditure Framework for the period 2023-2025 is underway.

To ensure **efficient co-ordination of donor support in the** **area of PAR**, the plan included several initiatives: adopting a roadmap for implementing the Sector Reform Contract, managing and monitoring it via “policy dialogue”, and other co-ordination platforms. Additionally, developing a risk management system for PAR, enhancing human resource capacity within the Sector for European Integration and International Cooperation to oversee the implementation of the sector budget support instrument and the PAR Sector Reform Contract, and bolstering capacity for donor co-ordination and project management. Nevertheless, as per the annual reports on the implementation of the PARS AP,[[49]](#footnote-50) the roadmap has not been prepared, and the risk management system has not been put into effect. In terms of capacity, the Rulebook on internal organisational of MPALSG for 2023 anticipates a rise in employee numbers in the subsequent period. However, the count of actual staff employed between 2021 and 2023 is one less than the initial count. In recent years, staff trainings focused on enhancing soft skills to bolster donor co-ordination and communication of PAR outputs have been organised. As per the current legal framework, donor support co-ordination falls under the Ministry of European Integration (MEI). Hence, the upcoming planning cycle should emphasise augmenting the capacity of this institution while fostering closer collaboration between MPALSG and MEI. Alternatively, the practice of planning activities within the co-ordination realm by PARS AP might not continue in the next cycle. This consideration arises from the fact that activities pertaining to donor support co-ordination are part of the multi-year development assistance planning document rather than PARS.

**A co-ordination mechanism for the planning, implementation and monitoring of PAR communication at the national level is in operation.** All anticipated direct outputs were successfully attained in the previous period: capacities in both human resources and technical aspects for communicating PAR were heightened; annual operational strategies for PAR communication were established, alongside quarterly and annual reports evaluating their implementation; findings from annual opinion surveys, reflecting public perceptions of the PAR process and outputs are now available. Additionally, it is noteworthy that, for the first time, a distinct section within the PAR Strategy was dedicated to communicating the process and outputs of the PARS. This section presents an analysis of this domain and suggests measures and activities for implementation. Notably, this marks the inaugural integration of communication reform activities within the PAR Strategy. The annual operational plan for PAR communication stands as the secondary level of planning document. Here, activities pertaining to communicating the processes and outputs of the PAR receive further annual elaboration and detailing.

To foster the **harmonisation, standardisation, and ongoing PAR communication within public administration,** the intended direct outputs were: enhanced capabilities of PR officers and HRM organisational units in SABs and LSGUs regarding the essence, methodology, channels, and tools for interdepartmental and internal PAR communication; augmented technical capabilities through the establishment and operation of a bulletin board as an internal communication tool; availability of findings from an annual survey among public servants concerning information about the PAR process and outputs. All initiatives, except for the implementation of the bulletin board, have been completed. However, the domain of internal communication stands as an area to be further enhanced in the forthcoming planning period (further details are provided in Annex 6: Sectoral Analysis – Communication and Co-ordination).

In the area of **enhancing the visibility and communication of the PAR process** **and its accomplished outputs**, all projected outputs have been met: a map illustrating SABs’ and LSGs' capacities for PAR communication is now available; standards governing PAR communication have been officially adopted.

Guidelines for establishing and managing profiles on social media platforms by SABs and LSGs have been adopted and put into practice; capacities of HR leaders, PR, and media staff to effectively communicate and report on the PAR and its outputs have been augmented; awareness among citizens and businesses regarding their rights and the PAR outputs has been raised (further details provided in Annex 6: Sectoral Analysis – Communication and Co-ordination).

However, survey results indicate a need for additional information on PAR topics. Furthermore, there is a highlighted necessity for continuity and perseverance in executing both individual reform activities and the co-ordination and communication aspects of the reform.

***Question 2. What were the main factors that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives? What obstacles have been encountered in the implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025, to what extent and how have they been overcome?***

The information obtained from document analysis and fieldwork highlights internal drivers of reform, where observable outputs exist, encompassing aspects such as political determination, skilled management of staff, internal capabilities, and conducive work environments. In these cases, the authorities were proactive, their organisational culture enabled change, and often the driving force was younger staff who are more easily accepting change and who are themselves drivers of change.

Furthermore, a robust normative framework can also serve as a catalyst for change, holding the potential to instigate more substantial transformations. Externally, drivers in the recent period have been multifaceted: Covid epidemic,[[50]](#footnote-51) the European integration process, donor support, an active civil society, and the Republic of Serbia's participation in global initiatives like the Open Government Partnership (OGP).<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/members/serbia/>.

Concerning the barriers to reform implementation, the review reveals that the challenges predominantly originate from internal sources within the system. Despite variations in specifics, similar obstacles were found across all areas of PAR encompassed in this review. Notably, no external obstacles were identified through interviews and focus groups. Insufficient institutional capacity—both in human and financial resources—lack of adequate civil society engagement in planning and reporting processes, frequent elections leading to frequent turnover in decision-makers within state administrative bodies, ineffective implementation of established legal frameworks, frequent lack of understanding and support from administrative staff, ambiguity in vision regarding reform directions in certain areas, and ineffective co-ordination within the system—all contribute to the challenges faced.

## 5.5 Driving Forces of the Reform

As per the submitted employee questionnaires, the predominant driving forces crucial for achieving outputs in public administration reform were primarily characterised by: the expertise of managers (60.38%), economic stability (59.80%), adequate staff capacity encompassing diverse work scopes (48.33%), and a conducive work environment (46.73%). Other factors followed in ratings, such as political stability (39.04%), the presence of political will and vision (30.04%), the European Union accession process (31.79%), and an active civil society (19.74%).[[51]](#footnote-52)

Conversely, according to the survey results from CSOs, the key driving forces identified were an active civil society and the European Union accession process.[[52]](#footnote-53) Additionally, several organisations highlighted the significance of political vision and human capacity as elements for driving reform (please see the graph below). One organisation, under the category “other” specified that the driving force is *“expertise, active engagement of employees based on expertise, knowledge, and determination.”*[[53]](#footnote-54)

*Source: Civil Society Survey (please see Annex 10)*

The interviews revealed **internal drivers** of reform, such as *proactive institutional bodies and their organisational culture fostering change*. Additionally, in specific institutions, *young individuals* are advocates and instigators of change, notably seen in e-Government initiatives. Internal capacities are recognised horizontally either as a driving force or as an obstacle if they do not exist (e.g. in the PAR Strategy 2021-2030, for the first time, a special segment for the PAR communication processes and outputs was foreseen. Moreover, for the first time there were *internal capacities* that recognised the importance of communication for the implementation of the reform).

Moreover, participants recognised the value of a robust *normative framework as a catalyst for change with a potential to initiate significant changes* and improve the existing public administration development level (evident in areas like professional development and the legal aspects of access to information of public importance).

The internal driver for change is certainly *a clear political will and a focus on public administration reform.*A good example of this is the recent UN study on e-Government: “*The improved ranking of Serbia's e-Government can be partly attributed to the government's renewed commitment to the Republic of Serbia's e-Government Development Programme 2020-2022 and the Action Plan for its implementation.* “[[54]](#footnote-55)

When it comes to **external factors that were the initiators of change**, i.e. which encouraged the implementation of the reform, the *covid pandemic* was recognised, through interviews, as an accelerator of change and as a test that was supposed to show whether the outputs of the reform would withstand the test of reality. The report on the implementation of the PAR Strategy for 2020 states that the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the use of existing digital tools and services. In addition, it also stimulated the creation of new ones, changed the concept of the workplace in the office and introduced the concepts of flexibility and adaptability of the administration so that the administration could respond to existing and future challenges.[[55]](#footnote-56) Similarly, the Covid environment encouraged citizens to improve their skills in terms of using modern technologies, digitalisation, online communication, as well as to use electronic services more.

*The process of European integration* plays a key role in external factors.The EU accession process Union implies harmonisation with “acquis communautaire” and thus the continuous implementation of reforms in all areas. Most of the support, both financial and in the form of direct capacity building, comes from European funds. In addition, the European Commission's Enlargement Strategy from 2020 has re-emphasised public administration reform as one of the fundamental reform areas on the road to European Union membership, signalling that accession countries should work more proactively in this area.

*The presence of donor support*, both from the EU and other donors, proves to be very important for the implementation of reform measures, especially considering that a large number of activities implemented so far through the implementation of the PARS AP 2021-2025 (in 2021 and 2022) have been implemented from donor sources.[[56]](#footnote-57)

*The participation of the Republic of Serbia in the global initiative for Open Government* *Partnership* is another recognised external driving force. Through participation in this initiative, action plans are adopted and implemented to enhance fundamental principles like open government, accountability, and transparency within public authorities. This involvement further fosters advancements in these particular areas.

Finally, *an active and developed civil society* that monitors the situation and acts PAR co-ordination mechanisms (see the section on co-ordination and communication), contribute to reform processes through their own monitoring of the situation, their recommendations and their initiatives.

## 5.6 Obstacles

When it comes to the main obstacles perceived in the implementation of reforms, the surveyed civil servants see *the lack of sufficient institutional capacity and human resources* (56.25%) as the biggest challenge, immediately followed by *financial resources* (50.44%). A significant number of respondents cited the lack of trainees and new staff selected for their competences (39.83%), then the lack of vision and knowledge among managers (30.38%), the lack of internal communication within and between institutions (30.23%) and the frequent elections and changes (28.05%) as other obstacles.

*Source: Survey for public authorities (please see Annex 9)*

On the other hand, civil society representatives who participated in the *online* survey identified *the insufficient involvement of civil society* (citizens, civil society organisations, media outlets, academia, etc.) *in the planning and reporting processes for regulations and public policy documents as a major obstacle* to the sustainability of the changes introduced/established in the public administration system. A high percentage of organisations believes that the challenge lies in the lack of external communication about changes, rights and duties and the importance of reform activities, followed by the lack of institutional capacity and human resources, the frequent elections and changes, the lack of institutional monitoring and control of the implementation of planned measures in PAR and the lack of internal communication within and between institutions (chart below).

*Source: Survey for Civil Society (please see Annex 10)*

Similar results were found in the interviews, where *the lack of capacity was recognised as a key challenge in all areas of the PAR*, followed by the outflow of competent staff and the employment of insufficiently qualified staff. In addition, there are opinions that *citizens still do not understand the PAR*, as the activities of the institutions are sometimes communicated separately from PAR, although these activities are carefully planned as part of the Strategy. As a result, not all reforms are recognised as reforms achieved within the PAR, which indicates additional space in the area of co-ordination and communication of the results achieved. Another obstacle is *the frequency of elections and the reallocation of resources within the executive branch in the periods between elections*. This leads to frequent turnovers of decision-makers within state administrative bodies, necessitating a rapid rebuilding of awareness regarding the significance of reform within short time frames, often lasting a year or less. Over time, personal visions for reform and accountability for outputs gradually develop. However, due to time constraints, this internal obstacle commonly manifests as reduced frequency in the functioning of co-ordination structures.

The review has revealed a shared challenge across all PAR areas, manifested in the *inadequately effective execution of a well-designed established legal framework*, which is well set and contains suitable solutions. *Systemic backing and endorsement from senior management, alongside a clear vision for the direction of reforms,* are notably absent in specific issues. This lack is evident in the discernible gap in attained outputs for instance, between HRM and accountability in relation to the area of Service Delivery. Significant reform strides encounter obstacles as certain matters span multiple state administrative bodies, necessitating systemic solutions achieved through collaborative efforts, thereby underscoring *the need for enhanced co-ordination within the system.* Moreover, challenges often arise due to *inadequate awareness across the public administration system* regarding the importance of reform initiatives, *resistance to change*, and *disparities in capacities among state administrative bodies meant to drive change*.

# 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents numerous conclusions and recommendations resulting from the evaluation process, pertaining to the contribution of the reform to the further improvement of the public administration in accordance with European principles. The objective of the review was to capture varied viewpoints by engaging a diverse array of participants, including state administration bodies, experts, government officials, partners, donors, and representatives of non-governmental organisation. The combination of interviews and field observations added depth to the data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. The review derives conclusions and recommendations from analysis, aiming to present options and facilitate decision-making for the next cycle of public administration reform in the Republic of Serbia.

**C 0.1.** The Republic of Serbia has so far achieved significant progress in the implementation of the PARS AP in terms of the outcomes envisaged in the PARS, but there are differences between the thematic areas, with better results in the areas of service delivery and communication and co-ordination and less good results in the areas of HRM, and accountability and transparency. When evaluating the outcomes, it is important to keep in mind that the implementation of the PARS AP took place in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021 and the early parliamentary elections, followed by a technical Government mandate during most of 2022. Another significant impediment lies in the insufficiently developed awareness regarding the importance of reforms and the existing resistance to change.

**R 0.1** For the the next planning cycle, it is recommended to include activities within each thematic area that are related to change management, in order to build an organisational culture based on innovation and continuous improvement.

**THEMATIC AREA OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

**Conclusions**

**C 1.1.** **Efforts to date in the area of HRM have not yet yielded transformative results, although analytical activities, the development of a normative framework, and capacity building, form the basis for more ambitious reforms planned to take place before the implementation of the Action Plan is finalised.** A good example of this progress is the streamlining of the strategic framework for HRM, consolidating all HRM aspects into a single planning document, i.e. the PARS. Establishing cooperation with higher education institutions and the student internship programme in public administration are also examples of good practice. On the other hand, there are delays in recruiting staff in accordance with the needs of the authorities, in solving the issue of reducing the number of acting senior management posts, in filling positions in accordance with the competency framework, in establishing a new unified information system for HRM in government bodies and in AP and LSGs bodies, and in implementing the reform of the salary system.

**Recommendations**

**R 1.1.** During the remaining implementation period of the PARS AP, increase efforts in the HRM domain to implement key reform measures and achieve expected outputs (especially in aligning employment with government staffing needs, establishing a unified information system for HRM across government and local self-government bodies, and implementing reforms in the salary system).

**R 1.2.** Take additional measures and intensify activities with the aim of reducing the number of senior civil servants in acting positions.

**R 1.3.** Continue the development and implementation of the system of professional development and promotion of the state administration as an attractive employer, with the further introduction of innovative methods and consideration of the establishment of a system for measuring and monitoring the effects of activities implemented in practice.

**THEMATIC AREA OF SERVICE DELIVERY**

**Conclusions**

**C 2.1.** **Considerable progress has been made in the area of service delivery.** This progress is visible in the established service **delivery** policy, as well as the development of new and optimisation of existing services, the development of physical and electronic one-stop-shops, the creation of an analytical and planning basis for the development of services, and the introduction of quality management in administration. All of these outcomes have the transformative potential to bring about a positive change in organisational culture and access to services. On the other hand, the activities to introduce a system to measure the satisfaction with service delivery have not yet been implemented, which limits the possibilities to understand to what extent the reform activities have actually brought changes for the end users. Research activities related to service delivery have been carried out and can be a good basis for considering alternatives to the introduction of a centralised approach and standardisation of services, the lack of which is a limitation to the uniform application of public services. The level of awareness and understanding of services by the administration, citizens and the business community is also an area for further continuous work.

**Recommendations**

**R 2.1.** Carry out the activities foreseen by the PARS AP towards the introduction and implementation of a methodology to measure the satisfaction of end users of services.

**R 2.2**. Based on analytical data, it is important to consider the best options, including normative and institutional solutions, to create a centralised approach to services in order to standardise and unify the provision of services.

**R 2.3.** Create (and implement) a roadmap for the introduction of quality management in the public administration in the new planning cycle in order to establish centralized coordination and define clear steps for the introduction of European quality standards in the administration's work.

**R 2.4.** Work continuously and more frequently on the promotion of existing and future innovative solutions, electronic and physical services, one-stop-shops, simplified services, portals such as e-Consultation Portal, e-Administration Portal, Register of Administrative Procedures, IT State Centres, etc. so that citizens, business and administration are familiar with the rights and possibilities and to change awareness and reduce resistance to change among civil servants and the public.

**THEMATIC AREA OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY**

**Conclusions**

**C 3.1.** The area of **transparency is making good progress**, evident in the improvement of the regulatory framework governing the operations of independent bodies and consistent advancement in the publication of data by administrative authorities, presented in a machine-readable (open) format. Some of the results have particular potential to encourage further progress - a uniform information system for whistle-blowers, the process of strengthening the capacity oft he Commissioner for open access to information of public importance and personal data protection, and the steady increase in the number of administrative bodies publishing their data on the Open Data Portal. However, the current application of the new legal framework indicates an abuse of the right of access to information, which burdens the system and negatively affects the exercise of this right of access to information.

**C 3.2.** Despite the steps taken towards introducing and/or strengthening the principle of **accountability** of public administration bodies, **the results achieved are not yet sufficient to make significant progress in practice**.Namely, the analytical work and enhancements of the regulatory framework governing the operations of independent state bodies have indeed bolstered accountability, however, a concerning negative trend is observed in the administration's response to the actions of these independent bodies, which is a crucial area necessitating further improvement.

The introduction of systemic solutions (the area of managerial accountability and performance-based management) is being implemented more slowly than planned. Among other things, the fact that parts of this area fall within the remit of several authorities poses a challenge for the co-ordination and standardisation of approaches.

**Recommendations**

**R 3.1.** During the remaining implementation period of PARS AP, agree on activities outlined in the roadmap for managerial accountability that will be integrated and implemented in the upcoming PARS AP cycle from 2026 to 2030, in the direction of developing systemic solutions for both managerial accountability and performance management.

**R 3.2.** By the end of the implementation of the Action plan, it is necessary to intensify the efforts in terms of defining clear responsibilities within the public administration system, and to define the concept and scope of public administration.

**R 3.3.** Take advantage of the ever-growing number of sets and institutions publishing data in machine-readable format by visualising and reusing them for practical purposes.

**R 3.4.** Take measures to improve the actions of public authorities based on the recommendations of independent public authorities and to prevent abuse of the right of free access to information of public importance.

**THEMATIC AREA OF CO-ORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION**

**C 4.1.** **Co-ordination and communication activities have led to better information for citizens about PAR, but there is still room to promote further recognition of public administration reform** (*Administration tailored to all of us*).The standardisation of messages, communication on outputs, and the rights citizens and the economy, proved to be examples of good practices. They need to be further developed in the next period to avoid institutions reporting on the implementation of certain activities without referring to PAR, i.e. emphasising that these activities are specific to PAR. Insisting that the strategy is accompanied by communication activities has proven useful for implementation and for raising awareness among the administration, citizens and the business community of the existence of innovative solutions and reform activities. However, the placement of these activities in a separate operational plan did neither contribute to the full integration of communication activities with other AP activities not to the improvement of internal communication, leading to fragmentation. Platforms for data entry (internal UIS), analysis and monitoring (<https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/>) have also proved useful. Co-ordination structures are transparent and inclusive and include various stakeholders, including civil society organisations. However, there are visible limitations in terms of the number and capacity of bodies responsible for co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation, which represents an obstacle to more efficient co-ordination and communication of the reform. This affects the consolidation of recommendations to improve the PAR that emerge from various reports.

**Recommendations**

**R 4.1.** Moreover, there's a necessity to consolidate the operational plan into an integrated set of communication activities. This transformation would facilitate the interactive collaboration of PR services and implementing units, fostering consistent monitoring and communication about planned activities (in concurrence with planning of activities, activities related to their communication should also be planned).

**R 4.2.** In the area of co-ordination, it is necessary to continue activities to strengthen the number and capacity of the bodies responsible for co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation (e.g. by increasing the number of implementers, training for monitoring, evaluation and reporting, etc.).

**R 4.3.** The co-ordination, harmonisation and consolidation of recommendations should be improved, along with the responses to these recommendations vis-a-vis PAR. Sustaining the commendable practice of reviewing, discussing, and reporting on the progress of consolidated recommendations within the co-ordination meetings is essential.

**R 4.4.** It is necessary to plan a mechanism for more frequent meetings at all levels, with more operational agendas. One of the options to be considered for the new planning cycle is to focus the political level of co-ordination on organising quarterly, thematic meetings of the government, where the central theme will be PAR. This would aim at increasing the importance of the PAR and its gaining weight in deciding on important issues for the PAR. The administrative level of co-ordination should be consolidated so that there is only one administrative level for all areas of the Strategy, including the programmes, in order to ensure the functioning, exchange of information and uniform implementation of all reforms in the area of the PAR.

**R 4.5.** In the area of internal communication, particular attention should be paid to the planning of activities and mechanisms aimed at the internal transmission of messages, the exchange of information and the co-ordination of activities in specific areas of the reform (formal and informal networks of local officials, common internal platforms for the exchange of information and data, joint and co-ordinated promotional and communication activities, etc.).

**R 4.6.** Continuation and intensification of the good practices started so that individual reforms planned within the framework of the PAR Strategy or resulting from its implementation are promoted as PAR reforms.

# ANNEXES

## Annex . Terms of Reference

**Support to Public Administration Reform under the PAR Sector Reform ContractEuropeAid/137928/DH/SER/RS**

**Terms of Reference**

**Title of assignment**: Mid-Term Review of the Action Plan (2021-2025) of the Serbian Public Administration Reform Strategy (2021-2030).

**Number of experts**: One SNKEs, one JNKE

**Expertise required**: Public Administration Reform, Policy Evaluation

**Component:** III

**Activity lines according to work plan** 3.1.1

**Working days foreseen:** 45 senior working days, 45 junior working days

**INTRODUCTION**

**Strategic framework for the Public Administration Reform (PAR)**

In April 2021, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted a new Strategy for Public Administration Reform (PAR), covering the period 2021-2030, and an Action Plan (AP) for its implementation, for the period 2021-2025. Both the PAR Strategy (PARS) and the PAR Action Plan (PAR AP) were developed in accordance with the Law on the Planning System (LPS) of the Republic of Serbia, passed in 2018.[[57]](#footnote-58) The development of the Public Administration Reform Strategy (PARS) was preceded by a comprehensive external evaluation of the previous PAR Strategy, adopted in 2014, which resulted in a number of key recommendations for future planning[[58]](#footnote-59), as well as a report on lessons learnt from the management of that evaluation.[[59]](#footnote-60)

The new PARS is conceived as an umbrella policy for all PAR related policy documents in Serbia. Its overall objective is the “further improvement of public administration operations and the quality of formulation of public policies in line with the European Principles of Public Administration, delivering high quality services to citizens and businesses, and the development a professional public administration that will significantly contribute to economic stability and improvement of the standards of living.”[[60]](#footnote-61)

As depicted in the figure below, the (new) PARS has eight specific objectives, which are structured around six thematic areas. The PAR AP defines activities for five specific objectives in three thematic areas, namely (i) human resources development, (ii) service delivery and (iii) accountability and transparency.

Figure : Strategic Framework for Public Administration Reform in Serbia



In addition to service-related activities in the PAR AP, the area of service delivery is covered by the e-Government programme (2020-2022 and 2023-2025) and the Programme for the Simplification of Administrative Procedures and Regulations (“e-Paper”) Programme. The remaining thematic areas of the PARS (public policy management and regulatory reforms, public finance management and local government development) are each covered by a programme, i.e. the Public Financial Management Reform Programme (PFMRP), the Programme for Improving Public Policy Management and Regulatory Reform (PPMRRP), and the Programme for the Reform of the Local Self-Government System, each of which is supported by an AP.

Starting in 2014, the Serbian Government has also adopted a series of APs for the implementation of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) initiative, aiming at more efficient public service delivery to citizens and the economy (e.g. through digitisation), better access to information, open data and data reuse, participation of citizens in decision-making processes, and improving accountability and transparency of Government.[[61]](#footnote-62)

Additional PAR related policies are in place, such as the AP for the Implementation of the Government Programme (APIGP) for the period 2023-2026,[[62]](#footnote-63) the Economic Reform Programme for the period 2023-2025,[[63]](#footnote-64) the Public Procurement Development Programme for the period 2019-2023,[[64]](#footnote-65) the Strategy for Digital Skills Development for the period 2020-2024[[65]](#footnote-66) the Artificial Intelligence Development Strategy (2020−2025)[[66]](#footnote-67), the Strategy for Development of an Information Society and Information Security (2021-2026)[[67]](#footnote-68), and others.

**Legal framework for public policy management**

The Law on the Planning System (LPS), adopted in 2018, aims at a more systematic public policy management (PPM) processes in all policy areas, including PAR. At the same time, PAR serves also a transmission belt for implementing the new legal framework in other policy areas. In addition, the LPS establishes a hierarchy of public policy documents (PPDs), which the Serbian administration is required to adhere to. The LPS also requires administrative bodies (further defined in Article 26 LPS) to develop and annually update medium-term plans (MTPs).

Given a number of challenges experienced by stakeholders in the enforcement of various parts of the ambitious new legal framework, the Public Policy Secretariat (PPS) initiated, in 2020, the preparation of an in-depth analysis of the implementation of the LPS, and the accompanying by-laws, to assess their application in practice and suggest possible improvements to further enhance sound policy management. The experts conducting the review, in 2020 and 2021, concluded that while the legal framework and its application are not perfect, there were no impediments that would seriously endanger the attainment of the reform objectives. The analytical report makes targeted recommendations to achieve the reform goals faster and more efficiently.[[68]](#footnote-69) The results of the analysis were reviewed in roundtable discussions whose results are intended to be used as a basis for drafting new and revising existing bylaws, to make the implementation of the LPS more efficient.[[69]](#footnote-70)[[70]](#footnote-71)

A list of other laws particularly relevant to the functioning and reform of the public administration in Serbia is annexed to this document.

## PAR Implementation Structure

The PARS envisages a three-tier structure for co-ordinating its implementation. At the political level, the PAR Council (PARC), which was re-constituted in 2022, became the sole co-ordinator for all PAR-related PPDs.[[71]](#footnote-72) The PARC is empowered to initiate and propose to the Government of Serbia to undertake measures and activities related to public administration reform and public finance reform, to promote and monitor the implementation of the PARS and all other hierarchically lower public policy documents, as well as the Open Government Partnership, and the development of e-Government and the digitalisation of the public administration. It also has the mandate to promote the inclusion of the principles and goals of PAR in other public policy documents, harmonise higher with lower level PPDs and provide preliminary opinions to the Government on draft PPDs. Since the adoption of the PARS in December 2020, the PARC has held three meetings. The most recent meeting took place in January 2023.

At the administrative level, a new Inter-Ministerial Project Group (IMPG) was established in September 2021,[[72]](#footnote-73) comprising an umbrella group, and sub-groups that follow the thematic areas of the PARS, for the period of validity of the PAR AP (2021-2025). For each thematic area, co-ordinators and deputy co-ordinators were appointed. In addition to facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the PARS, the resolution establishing the new IMPG obliges the group to consider and adopt reports on the implementation and evaluation of the results achieved by the PARS. The first IMPG meeting under the new PARS was held in October 2021, at which rules of procedure for the period 2021-2025 were adopted,[[73]](#footnote-74) followed by a second meeting in May 2022. A first thematic meeting, focusing on human resources management, as well as a horizontal meeting discussing overall progress, were held in late 2022. At least 4 IMPG meetings are planned to be held in 2023.

At the operational level, the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government (MPALSG) provides the IMPG with support, by monitoring and reporting on progress of the PARS implementation and organising periodic IMPG meetings.

**PAR Monitoring**

In order to facilitate systematic monitoring of the implementation of the PARS, indicator passports were developed and adopted for the overall objective, as well as for every specific objective and every measure. These passports include information on the indicator type (quantitative or qualitative) and level (impact, outcome, result/output), unit of measurement and its nature, source of data/information, the authority responsible for collecting data, data collection frequency, the calculation methodology applied (formula/equation), baseline and target values by year, as well as past trends. The passport indicators are annexed to the PARS, as an integral part of it.

As required by the LPS, the strategic framework for PAR and its elements, including the indicator passports and their values, are recorded electronically and regularly updated in the Unified Information System (UIS), administered by the PPS. In order to make progress on PAR more accessible and visible to the public, and for developing informed opinions and strengthening participation, MPALSG, with support from the EU funded project “Support to Public Administration Reform under the PAR Sector Reform Contract” (hereinafter “EU4PAR”), has developed a dynamic [Online Monitoring Tool](https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/) (OMT) for monitoring the implementation of the PARS, which was launched in April 2020. The OMT presents the most important policy documents for PAR, and comprehensive real-time data from the UIS, in a freely accessible way.

**Project Context**

EU4PAR is part of complementary support to the EU funded PAR Sector Budget Support (SBS) Programme. The project has started in March 2018 and will close in November 2023. The purpose of the project is to strengthen the capacity of the central government to manage PAR and co-ordinate the implementation of the PAR Sector Reform Contract (PAR SRC) through four main components, which are interlinked and feed into each other:

Component I Support to the policymaking and implementation process in public administration bodies

Component II Capacity building

Component III Support for further development of PAR strategic framework

Component IV Support to the implementation of the PAR Sector Reform Contract

Under project Component I, several manuals, guidelines and other tools, such as a manual on all stages of the public policy management process (PPMP), checklists and templates for public policy proponents, guidelines and templates for ex-ante and ex-post impact assessment, evaluation grids for policy impact assessments (PIAs) and regulatory impact assessments (RIAs), a handbook and guidelines on policy costing and on medium-term planning, and a manual on public consultation, have been developed with the aim to facilitate full compliance with the LPS, its by-laws and other relevant regulations. The component also supports the development of online access to these resources through a digital PPMP platform. Also, under this component, the project has supported an in-depth analysis of the legal framework for policy planning, with recommendations for improvement, the rollout of medium-term (institutional) planning, and assisted the process of developing the APIGP.

Under Component II, following a comprehensive needs assessment, capacity building activities for covering all stages of the PPM cycle have been initiated in January 2020. Under this component, the project also supports (i) the introduction of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), as envisaged in the PARS, in the Serbian administration, including a training of trainers (ToT) scheme, as a change management instrument using the expertise of civil servants to improve organisational processes and performance, as well as (ii) the development of an online training for customer journey mapping.

Component III provides support in implementing the emerging PPM system in the context of the strategic framework for PAR. In this context, the EU4PAR project assisted MPALSG in managing the external evaluation of the PAR Strategy adopted in 2014, as well as the development of the current PARS (2021-2030). The project also assisted with the assessment of the Regulatory Reform and Improved Public Policy Management Strategy (2016–2020) and the development of the PPMRRP (2021-2025). In the area of e-Government, the project supported the elaboration of ex-post and ex-ante assessments of the e-Government Strategy, adopted in 2015, the development of the e-Government programme (2020-2022), as well as its ex-post assessment and the development of a revised proposal for the e-Government programme for the period 2023-2025. In order to strengthen the planning, implementation and quality control of policy and programme evaluations in the Serbian administration, EU4PAR supported the participation of five senior officials in the International Programme for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET) in Bern/Switzerland in 2022. In addition, EU4PAR supported an extensive analysis of managerial accountability in the Serbian administration and the development of a roadmap for its strengthening.

Under Component IV, the project assists beneficiaries to streamline the management, co-ordination and monitoring of the strategic framework for PAR and to establish and develop effective PAR co-ordination and communication forums between the various stakeholders in the PAR SRC and provided support for annual self-assessments of progress in implementing the PAR SRC. More specifically, the project provided support to the main PAR co-ordinating and implementing bodies by analysing co-ordination challenges and providing hands-on support to experiment with new modalities to enhance the functioning of co-ordination, especially in the framework of the IMPG. EU4PAR also assisted MPALSG in developing an analytical report with short-term and long-term recommendations for strengthening the effectiveness of the PAR co-ordination structures.

In the context of PAR donor co-ordination, the project supported the development of a concept paper, which recommends the use of both thematic and horizontal meetings with PAR donors, as well as the direct interaction of IMPG sub-groups with donors in thematic areas of the PARS. The project has also been assisting the building of capacity to develop and update a medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) for the PAR sector. Finally, EU4PAR also supported an analysis of the co-ordination of crisis management by the Centre-of-Government (CoG) and, on the basis of the analysis, assisted the development of a roadmap for strengthening crisis management in the Serbian administration.

**Issues to be Addressed**

The PARS (2021-2030) envisages two interim reviews (2023 and 2027) and an *ex-post* impact assessment, at the end of its implementation period. The first of the two interim reviews is expected to help (i) assessing the need for a potential revision of the PAR AP (2021–2025), as well as (ii) informing the development of a new or revised PAR AP for the period beyond 2025. The ToR at hand encompass the mid-term review (MTR) of the PAR AP (2021-2025), which focusses on the thematic pillars of human resources management, service delivery and accountability and transparency.

The remaining pillars of the PARS are not subject to the review described in the ToR at hand. The PPMRRP envisages an ex-post analysis of the effects of the Program in 2023, to be used for a possible revision of the PPMRRP (2021–2025). Also, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) plans a revision of the PFMRP, to be launched in the second quarter of 2023.

In recent years, as an integral part of the efforts aimed at enhancing systematic and evidence-based public policy management, the development of capacity of the Serbian administration to manage various types of assessments and evaluations of PPDs in the context of PAR has received increasingly more attention, through strengthening the legal framework for policy management, the repeat exercise of various types of (externally supported) policy assessments, and self-assessments under the PAR SRC, formal training (e.g. through IPDET), as well as through structural amendments to the organisational framework for policy management.

PAR sector institutions have thus been progressively involved, and gradually taking more responsibility in the design, methodological development, implementation, consultation and quality control of PAR policy assessments, with the aim to train civil servants to become evaluation specialists, who will have sufficient knowledge and experience to manage evaluations independently, and share their expertise with colleagues in other sectors. This approach to capacity development is also closely linked to adjustments to the structural framework of the Serbian state administration, amendments to the Decree on Principles for Internal Organisation and Systematisation of Posts in Ministries, Special Organisations and Government Services adopted by GOS in March 2021 (in Article 21a) now require ministries and other public bodies to determine "analytical units" that will, among other tasks, monitor the performance and achievement of goals at all levels of an organisation.[[74]](#footnote-75) The need to establish such units without delay is also emphasised in the European Commission’s most recent Progress Report for Serbia.[[75]](#footnote-76)

Although, through the aforementioned measures, significant progress has been made in recent years in building capacity for managing all phases of the policy cycle by the Serbian administration, civil society organisations and evaluation practitioners, it has been found that the provision of external support in evaluation management should be maintained.[[76]](#footnote-77) The ToR at hand therefore continue to follow the approach of gradually transferring more knowledge and responsibilities for reviews, targeted assessments and evaluations of public policies to the Serbian administration, by increasingly assigning lead functions to the Serbian stakeholders. In the evaluation of the PARS, adopted in 2014, key functions, such as the development of the evaluation methodology, the revision of initial evaluation question and development of judgment criteria, the collection, validation and analysis of data and the formulation of findings, conclusions and recommendations were largely led by EU4PAR project experts, while the management of the evaluation was shared between the MPALSG and the project. A separate multi-stakeholder working group was established, as an evaluation reference group (ERG), to steer the evaluation exercise, ensure its impartiality and provide additional quality control on the deliverables of the review team.

In the envisaged MTR of the current PAR AP, defined under the ToR at hand, additional leadership functions will be assigned to the Serbian administration, while recognising that the legal framework for PPM is still relatively new and experience of stakeholders in its implementation, including assessments of public policies, requires further consolidation and integration into the work routines of staff and their job descriptions. Consequently, some project support is considered necessary, to facilitate the implementation of the planned PAR MTR. The envisaged support will primarily focus on providing methodological guidance, coaching and mentoring of the responsible civil servants.

Based on this approach and given the experience and expertise of the EU4PAR project in supporting the Serbian Government institutions in building capacity for the assessment and development of PAR policies, its deep understanding of the existing and further evolving regulatory framework for public policy management and full familiarity with the instruments for its practical application, MPALSG has requested the project to assist with further consolidating the evolving capacity for assessing the results of the current PAR AP.

Since the adoption of the PARS has been relatively recent, MPALSG determined that a broad assessment, against the criteria of relevance, coherence, impact, sustainability, and efficiency, already in 2023, would be too early to provide sufficiently meaningful conclusions and recommendations for future consideration. Hence, the MTR covered by the ToR at hand shall **focus on the effectiveness of implementation and main challenges** encountered. In doing so, the MTR will build, to a large extent, on the PAR monitoring data, including for 2022, which will be available as of early May 2023.

**OBJECTIVES**

**Overall Objective**

The overall objective of the assignment described in the ToR at hand is to strengthen the capacity of the Serbian administration for systematic and evidence-based public policy management in the area of PAR.

**Specific Objectives**

The MTR aims at achieving two sets of objectives, namely (i) reviewing progress in implementing the PAR Strategy AP and (ii) further developing the capacity of Serbian Government institutions for managing policy reviews.

**PAR Policy Progress Review**

The assignment described in these ToR will support the assessment of the current PAR AP, with a focus on the criterion of effectiveness, including the main challenges encountered during implementation and, based on the analysis, provide recommendations for taking corrective actions in the implementation of the PAR AP, where appropriate, as well as for the development of the new PAR AP (2026-2030). Indirectly, the review aims to further strengthen accountability, transparency, and visibility of PAR.

**Capacity building**

The capacity building objectives of the envisaged review, to be achieved mainly through coaching and mentoring, aim at further strengthening the evaluation capacity of involved institutions and individuals. More specifically, the review aims to build capacity in the following areas:

* Deepening the understanding of principal monitoring and evaluation practices;
* Finetuning evaluation objectives and questions, judgment criteria, developing an evaluation matrix and final report structure, drafting an effective inception report;
* Identifying the most appropriate data collection and analysis methods under resources and other restraints;
* Addressing possible gaps of data and information required to assess progress, i.e. recognition of where restitution of theories of change is required and how to go about it;
* Developing and using interview and focus group guidelines, conducting interviews, assembling and managing focus groups, and analysing the data gathered;
* Writing an evidence based review following the findings relevant to the review questions, conclusions, recommendations logic in a comprehensive yet concise manner supported by examples and synthesising where possible the findings into common factors of success and shortcomings and drawing the lessons learned for present and future use.
* Understanding the requirements for a “good” (final) policy review report and how to manage target group-oriented communication and dissemination of review results;

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Reference group**

For the purpose of the MTR envisaged under the ToR at hand, the IMPG will serve as reference group.[[77]](#footnote-78) In its role as reference group, the IMPG will fulfil the following functions:

* Steer the review in all key phases, including the inception, implementation and reporting phases;
* Provide input to the review team and demonstrate an open and transparent approach to critically analysing performance and delivery of the review;
* Facilitate access to the institutional, thematic, and methodological knowledge available in relevant parts of the public administration;
* Ensure that the review team can go about its work independently and facilitate the impartiality and usefulness of both the evaluation process and the deliverable(s);
* Provide quality control and endorse the deliverables (i.e. inception report and draft final report);
* Ensure a proper follow-up action plan for implementation after the completion of the review;

The IMPG will also serve as a reference group for other ongoing assessments and revisions of PAR policies, i.e. the PPMRRP and the PFMRP, and seek to harmonise approaches, facilitate co-ordination and exchange between the reviews and reach consensus on suggested amendments to the PARS and PAR AP, as well as any changes in the regulatory/normative framework for PAR.

**Review Manager**

The EU4PAR project will act as review manager. In this role, EU4PAR will be responsible for the following tasks:

* Support identification and access to data (organise briefings and de-briefings, support the review team in identifying datasets and accessing, and familiarising with data, support them in completing data collection, and provide contacts with relevant stakeholders);
* Monitor the work of the review team (provide first assessments of the quality of the reports submitted by the review team, ensuring that its independence is not compromised and that all points are explained in a clear and simple way and that suggestions from stakeholders are documented and, whenever appropriate, accepted);
* Discuss with the review team, and other relevant groups, revisions of review methodology, evaluation questions, judgment criteria, and other elements of the review; discuss reports and organise presentations, identify specific audiences that should receive feedback and organise formal or informal meetings to discuss particular issues;
* Distribute reports, support stakeholders in formulating responses, consult with stakeholders on follow-up action;
* Ensure quality control during the inception, implementation and reporting phases of the review. The quality control shall ensure that the draft reports meet adequate quality standards before sending them to the IMPG for comments. The quality control shall also facilitate consistency and coherence between findings, conclusions and recommendations, that findings reported are duly substantiated and that conclusions are supported by the relevant judgement criteria.
* Perform a quality assessment of the final review report. The quality assessment judges the final report and the overall review process. It is the final confirmation of the review team’s work and includes a judgement on whether key aspects of the work conducted meet the required standards and provides any related comments.
* The review manager consolidates the comments of stakeholders on draft reports to be sent to the review team.

**Review Team**

The review team will develop the detailed design and methodology for the review, collect and analyse data, as well as draft and revise reports, in close interaction with the review manager. In order to address both specific objectives (assessment of progress and capacity development) of the review in the most efficient and effective way, the review team will be composed of both (external) project experts and civil servants.

**Background**

With project support, five senior staff from project beneficiaries participated in a two-week training course on policy evaluation, organised by the International Programme for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET) in Bern/Switzerland. The aim of the participation in the IPDET in 2022 was to capacitate key PAR co-ordination and policy management staff to understand and apply methods and processes of policy evaluation, so as to build a critical first nucleus of in-house capacities for policy evaluation in the Serbian administration.

As a follow-up of the training, it has been agreed that the operationalisation of the upcoming PAR MTR will be a key platform to utilise the learned substance. For the purpose of composing the PAR review team, MPALSG will therefore appoint, from among the participants in the recent IPDET training, two civil servants as full members of the review team, resulting in a “mixed” team composed of civil servants and project experts. The project will provide the services of a “team leader”, to oversee the conceptual and practical work of the review, in accordance with the division of labour suggested in Table 1, below, to be further elaborated in the inception phase. The team leader will be supported by a junior evaluation expert, provided by the EU4PAR project.

**Division of Roles and Responsibilities**

The roles and responsibilities of the (external) project experts and civil servants in carrying out the review will complement each other in accordance with their level of experience and in order to maximise the learning transfer. The following tentative division will be further examined and validated in the review inception phase (a more detailed provisional list of tasks is presented in Annex II of this document).

**Table 1: Overview of role and responsibilities of the Team**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Phase | Role of civil servants | Role of project experts |
| **1. Inception** |  |  |
| Develop detailed work plan for the review with clear sequencing of tasks, the timelines for specific tasks under the review, detailed distribution of roles, inputs and outputs to be delivered by individual team members; facilitate team meeting for joint review of progress; | support | lead |
| Identify data sources and instruments for data retrieval; | support | lead |
| Collect and review documents which will be subject to the review as well as the monitored data and those missing; | support | lead |
| Complete the assessment approach and methodology by defining the scope, evaluation questions, judgement criteria and most relevant indicators i.e. the review matrix, as well as challenges-mitigation measures, interviews and focus groups guidelines, and the final report skeleton etc.; facilitate team meeting for joint review of progress; | support | lead |
| Draft inception report developed and approved by review manager. | support | lead |
| **2. Data Collection and Analysis** |  |  |
| Complete the collection of relevant documentation, information and data. facilitate team meeting for joint review of progress; | lead | support |
| Update the level of information by means of interviews, focus groups, questionnaires or any other suitable tools with relevant actors; | support | lead |
| Analyse the documentation against the evaluation questions and formulate working hypotheses; | lead | support |
| Elaborate preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations and present them to the IMPG; | lead | support |
| **3. Reports and Dissemination** |  |  |
| Prepare a draft final review report, including the elements listed in the below section on outputs to be presented to and approved by the IMPG; | lead | support |
| Quality control of draft report. Organise and facilitate a team workshop; | support | lead |
| Address comments received and develop final report. | lead | support |
| Prepare a short PPT and present main findings, conclusions and recommendations to IMPG; facilitate team meeting for joint review of progress; | support | lead |
| Present the main findings, conclusions and recommendations to the PARC; | lead | support |
| **4. Lessons Learned** |  |  |
| Draft/adjust a lessons learnt report with recommendations for future evaluation capacity building actions, and steps forward. Organise and facilitate a final team meeting | support | lead |

**Inception Phase**

In the inception phase of the review, the review team will lead the review process and the consultations with all relevant stakeholders and provide periodic updates to the project management on progress achieved and possible challenges encountered or expected. The inception phase will result in an inception report, which will include the elements listed in the below section on outputs, to be presented to and approved by the IMPG.

**Implementation Phase**

During the implementation phase, the review team will meet with the most relevant national and international stakeholders. SIGMA and ReSPA may be consulted online. Phone interviews and other tools may complement personal interviews to collect more data.

Recommendations should address weaknesses identified and be clear, well structured, operational and realistic in the sense of providing clear, feasible and relevant input for decision making and should clearly indicate the measures to be undertaken. Recommendations for action will be addressed to MPALSG. However, where appropriate, the review team will specify the role of any actor other than MPALSG in implementing the recommendations. Presentations of good practices and success stories and the use of different modalities and tools to enhance PAR objectives will be highlighted.

**Dissemination Phase**

During the dissemination phase, the review team shall organise a dissemination seminar, once the review has been completed, for presenting main findings, conclusions and recommendations to all relevant stakeholder groups.

**Project** **Support**

The EU4PAR experts will primarily focus on providing methodological guidance, coaching and mentoring of the civil servant members of the team, and other stakeholders as deemed necessary, throughout all phases of the review. However, any project support will cease in November 2023, when the project will be closed.

**Methodology**

The methodology should, *inter alia*, be based on DG NEAR's Evaluation guide.[[78]](#footnote-79) The review team will select the methods used to gather and analyse information and for making the assessment, but should take account of the following:

* The review shall be based on recognised evaluation techniques and triangulation methods;
* In addressing the evaluation questions, indicators defined in the PARS, and suitable additional indicators shall be used, as far as possible;
* The review team shall support findings and recommendations by explaining the degree to which these are based on opinion, analysis and objectively verifiable evidence. Where opinion is the main source, the degree of consensus and the steps taken to test the opinions shall be provided;
* The final evaluation questions and methodology (including judgement criteria and indicators) for this assignment will be completed and agreed upon during the inception phase. Advantages, limitations and risks involved in using the proposed tools and techniques shall be explained.
* There shall be a clear link between the evaluation questions addressed and the corresponding methodology proposed. The evaluation questions can be further elaborated, e.g. by providing operational sub-questions under each question, or merged where justified, but the overall number of questions shall remain manageable (see DG NEAR's Evaluation guide for guidance on the number of evaluation questions and their refinement).
* Where required and feasible, the review team shall develop (proxy) indicators to measure the outcomes;
* Where feasible, the review team shall take the SIGMA principles, currently under revision, and their expected piloting in Serbia, into considerations when developing recommendations for future planning;

**Evaluation questions**

The review shall examine the PAR strategy Action Plan against the criterion of effectiveness. Evaluation issues and questions will be refined at the inception stage, after review of the intervention logic. The following tentative evaluation questions have been identified:

* To what extent have the specific objectives of the PAR AP been achieved / are likely to be achieved?
* In areas where effectiveness has been high, which actions by stakeholders have contributed most to high effectiveness (driving forces/success factors)? In areas where effectiveness has been low, which actions by stakeholders explain the lack of progress (restraining forces)?
* What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives? Which obstacles have been encountered in the course of implementing the PARS AP, and to what extent and how were they overcome?

**Expected Outputs**

### General Reporting Requirements

The expected outputs of the MTR are an Inception Report, a draft Final Report, a Final Report and, as appropriate, interview guidelines or other suitable data collection instruments, as well as presentations on relevant issues, such as findings, conclusions and recommendations, a lessons learnt report, etc.

**Inception Report**

The Inception report will detail the final methodology, evaluation questions and judgement criteria, sources of information, timetable of the assignment and documents required and a tentative list of contacts to be met. The report should as a minimum provide:

* A summary of the objectives, scope and outputs of the review;
* The final evaluation questions, methodological approach, including the judgement criteria to be used and sources of information, samples of the questionnaires, etc.;
* A work plan for the implementation, synthesis and dissemination phases with an explicit division of labour between the team members;
* An overview of the status of the review;
* A first assessment of the data universe, whether it meets expectations and will provide a sound basis for responding to the evaluation questions;
* A description of problems encountered, and suggested solutions or mitigation actions;
* A proposal for the final structure of the final report;
* The inception report shall not exceed 10 pages, annexes excluded.

The review team shall submit the inception report to the review manager no later than 31 May 2023.

**Draft Final Report**

The review manager shall consolidate the comments and return them to the review team for integration into the final report in accordance with their professional judgment. Once comments have been addressed, the review team will draft an executive summary of no more than three pages, to be added to the report. The executive summary is an overview, which shall provide information on the (i) purpose of the assignment, (ii) methodology / procedure / approach, (iii) results /findings and (iv) conclusion and recommendations. The final report shall include a section on lessons learned consisting of a brief joint review of the experience in designing and implementing the review process, and recommendations for further developing capacity in planning, conducting and using policy reviews.

The review team shall submit the final report to the review manager no later than 31 October 2023.

**Final Report**

The review manager shall consolidate the comments and return them to the review team for integration into the final report in accordance with their professional judgment. Once comments have been addressed, the review team will draft an executive summary of no more than three pages, to be added to the report. The executive summary is an overview, which shall provide information on the (i) purpose of the assignment, (ii) methodology / procedure / approach, (iii) results /findings and (iv) conclusion and recommendations. The final report shall include a section on lessons learned consisting of a brief joint review of the experience in designing and implementing the review process, and recommendations for further developing capacity in planning, conducting and using policy reviews.

The review team shall submit the final report to the review manager no later than 31 October 2023.

**Main Tasks, Outputs and Project Resources**

The table below reflects an indicative allocation of working days of the project experts supporting the review. The tasks stipulated (below) are indicative and will likely require re-formulation and possibly re-scheduling in light of emerging new information and insights during the course of implementation of the activity. The allocation of working days is indicative and needs careful assessment during preparation of the work plan and constant monitoring and potential re-adjustment during implementation of the assignment.

**Table 2: Allocation of NKE working days**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Tasks | Outputs | W/D for  SNKE | W/D for JNKE |
| Lead/Support:   * Discussion and agreement on timelines and main milestones in the review, the work process and division of tasks within the review team and between the review team and the project experts. * Identifying data sources and instruments for data retrieval; * Collection and review of documents which will be subject to the review as well as the monitored data and those missing; * Review and update existing stakeholder list, (including importance and influence) to support the further review process; * Review and revision of evaluation questions, identification of data sources, development of interview and focus group guidelines; * Drafting, submission, presentation and finalisation of inception report. | * Minutes of kick-off meeting for the review; * Detailed work plan and Gantt chart for the review; * Inception report with review matrix (final evaluation questions, judgement criteria and most relevant indicators), list of data sources, interview and focus group guidelines, and final report skeleton; * Workshop presenting inception report. | 18 | 18 |
| Lead/Support:   * Collection of data in accordance with adopted methodology, including participation in interviews and focus group meetings; * Analysis of data against evaluation questions and formulation of working hypotheses; * Elaboration and presentation of preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations; | * Presentation of preliminary findings; * Inputs to draft final report; | 14 | 14 |
| Lead/Support:   * Development and quality control of draft final review report; * Addressing comments received and development of final report; * Presentation of main findings, conclusions and recommendations; * Publication of final report. | * Inputs to final report ((including executive summary and lessons learnt section, with recommendations for future evaluation capacity building actions, and steps forward). * Presentation of final report. | 10 | 10 |
| Lead/Support:   * Generating and writing up lessons learned for the process * Organising and facilitating workshop on the lessons learned, finalising and sharing | * Lessons learnt report | 3 | 3 |
| Total |  | 45 | 45 |

**RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

**Risks**

| **Description of risk** | **Probability** | **Impact** | **Mitigation plan** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The review team (or some of its members) is (are) lacking sufficient time to dedicate to the review; | Low | High | Members of the review team will be briefed about the scope of inputs needed from them prior to the start of the review, so that there is sufficient lead time to re-assign work to other managers or staff; |
| Delays related to changes of lead personnel in Government or in the composition of the IMPG | Low | Low | A contingency plan will be prepared at the outset of the process on how to carry out the assessment and development processes; |
| MPALSG and IMPG, and their members, lack sufficient capacity to lead the review process. | Low | High | Potential capacity gaps will be addressed explicitly in the initial discussions with MPALSG. At this occasion, risks will be re-evaluated and possible mitigation actions, such as temporarily re-prioritising or shifting workloads among stakeholders or outsourcing other tasks unrelated to the MTR, taken. |

**Assumptions**

* MPALSG will appoint the review team no later than by the end of April 2023
* The review manager will make the IMPG aware of its role as “reference group” for the review;
* The IMPG will provide feedback on the outputs and requests of the review team within a period of no more than two weeks;
* Monitoring data is available on time and provides sufficient and adequate information;
* National authorities and donors grant access to relevant documents;
* Stakeholders accept the review as an integral part of the PAR strategy implementation;
* Stakeholders are committed to act on recommendations and findings.

In the event that one or several of the above assumptions prove to be untrue, the review team shall immediately inform the Review Manager and EU4PAR key experts.

**REQUIRED PROJECT EXPERTISE**

A senior non-key expert (SNKE) will lead the EU4PAR support to the Review Team. He/she will meet the following minimum requirements:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Senior NKE : Evaluation Specialist** |
| Qualifications and skills | * A relevant university degree (preferably in political sciences, public administration, economics or similar) or equivalent professional experience of 12 years; * Excellent drafting skills in Serbian and ability to express him/herself clearly and concisely; * Working level knowledge of English; |
| General professional experience | * At least five years of professional experience, preferably seven in evaluation and monitoring of programmes or policies;   Proven experience as team leader or senior evaluator for at least three evaluations of strategies/programmes/instruments/policies; |
| Specific professional experience | * At least three years of work experience in the field of public administration reform; * Experience in evaluating policies or projects in EU accession countries is desirable; * Experience as quality controller in policy evaluations or studies would be an advantage; |

One junior non-key expert (JNKE) will work alongside the Senior EU4PAR Evaluation Specialist in supporting the review team. He/she will meet the following minimum requirements:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Junior NKE : Evaluation Specialist** |
| Qualifications and skills | * A relevant university degree (preferably in political sciences, public administration, economics) or equivalent professional experience of six years; * Excellent drafting skills in Serbian and ability to express him/herself clearly and concisely; * Working level knowledge of English; |
| General professional experience | * At least two years of professional experience in social research and/or data collection and analysis; |
| Specific professional experience | * At least two years of professional experience in implementation, evaluation or monitoring of policies, programmes or projects; |

**Modus Operandi**

The work of the EU4PAR project experts on this activity will be overseen by the EU4PAR Team Leader and Key Expert 2. The senior review NKE (review team leader), with support from the junior review NKE, will finetune their division or roles and responsibilities at the outset of the assignment and report regularly on progress. The JNKE shall directly report to the review team leader. He/she will and arrange and prepare meetings, manage invitations, take and share meeting notes, retrieve data, proofread written outputs, etc.

The NKEs will adhere to the implementation schedule agreed and advise project management without delay if a deviation from the workplan or amendments to the ToR at hand are necessary. The NKEs will ensure that meetings with beneficiaries are appropriately documented. In the realisation of the assignments, they will work closely with the review manager and other review team members and proactively co-ordinate with other NKEs in the project working on related activities, as circumstances require. The EU4PAR project will provide limited hospitality services for meetings of the IMPG and support the translation of reports.

It is expected that the review team leader, as described above, will assume overall responsibility for leading the review in close consultation with the review manager. The team will draft all required outputs under the assignment. The project experts will provide prompt feedback on the produced draft outputs and make themselves available for discussions with the review team within a reasonable period of time when requested by the review team or when their professional judgment or that of the project management requires to do so.

**REPORTING**

In addition to the contribution to the outputs indicated above, the project experts will contribute to EU4PAR’s monthly reports, through providing brief monthly summaries on the progress and activities performed, challenges encountered and planned activities in the subsequent month. The contributions will include minutes of key meetings held with stakeholders. Where requested, the experts will also contribute to interim progress reports and the final project report.

**Schedule and location of the task**

The indicative period for carrying out the assignments is from the second half of April 2023 until the end of October 2023. Given the anticipated closure of the project in November 2023, no time extension can be granted. The place of assignment will be Belgrade, Serbia.

**Conflict of Interest**

The NKEs are required to provide professional, objective, and impartial advice, at all times. Should a conflict of interest be identified in the course of the assignment, the experts should immediately inform the project management.

**Working Language**

The main working language of the EU4PAR is English. Under these ToR, reports, presentations and other documents shall be drafted in Serbian.

**Final clause**

The experts have the mandate for discussing topics related to the tasks of this assignment with relevant stakeholders. They are not authorised to represent the EU and/or the Government of Serbia, and to make any commitment on their behalf.

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## Annex 2. Evaluation Matrix

| Criteria for the Analysis | Indicators | Data sources | Data collection methods | Approach to Data Analysis |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Question 1. To what extent will the specific outputs of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 be achieved/likely to be achieved?* | | | | |
| Human Resources Management  C1.1 Activities carried out as part of the implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 promoted higher quality of human resources management. | * + 1. Evidence of successful implementation of key HRM activities as defined in the revised TC     2. Evidence of achievement of expected outputs as defined in the revised TC in the area of HRM * Higher quality management of human resources * Better quality and more efficient work of employees in the administration   + 1. Evidence and examples of cases where reform measures are listed in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 have contributed or have the potential to contribute to the achievement of the desired outputs of the reform defined in the revised TC: * State administration and LSGs attract, hire and retain competent, efficient and motivated staff | PARS for the period 2021-2030 and PARS AP for the period 2021-2025; national statistics; progress and impact reports, indicator-based data and analysis reports prepared by national agencies, SIGMA, the European Commission and other development partners or think tank organisations  Data collected through:   * Interviews and focus group discussions with the following stakeholders: * key state stakeholders (MPALSG, national institutions) * SIGMA, EU, other donors * Civil society   Online surveys with 1) administrative bodies; 2) civil society organisations that are members of the WeBER platform | Review of documents to identify themes for comparison of different documentation sources  Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions  Online surveys | Review of existing studies that identify the main challenges in Serbia  Review of documents listing analyses of capacity gaps and PAR measures  Comparative analysis of key national statistics and strategic documents and reports and other sources  Contribution analysis based on the theory of change comparing activities with results.  Qualitative iterative data analysis, triangulation of data sources |
| Services  C1.2  Activities carried out as part of the implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 promoted development, application and control of services | * + 1. Evidence of successful implementation of key activities in the area of services as defined in the revised TC     2. Evidence of fulfilment of the expected outputs in terms of the revised TC in the area of services * A system for the development, implementation and control of services has been established   + 1. Evidence and examples of cases where reform measures are listed in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 have contributed or have the potential to contribute to the achievement of the desired outputs of the reform defined in the revised TC: * End users are satisfied with the public services provided | PARS for the period 2021-2030 and PARS AP for the period 2021-2025; national statistics; progress and impact reports, indicator-based data and analysis reports prepared by national agencies, SIGMA, the European Commission and other development partners or think tank organisations  Data collected through:   * Interviews and focus group discussions with the following stakeholders: * key state stakeholders (MPALSG, national institutions) * SIGMA, EU, other donors * Civil society   Online surveys with 1) administrative bodies; 2) civil society organisations that are members of the WeBER platform | Review of documents to identify themes for comparison of different documentation sources  Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions  Online surveys | Review of existing studies that identify the main challenges in Serbia  Review of documents listing analyses of capacity gaps and PAR measures  Comparative analysis of key national statistics and strategic documents and reports and other sources  Contribution analysis based on the theory of change comparing activities with results.  Qualitative iterative data analysis, triangulation of data sources |
| Accountability and transparency  C1.3  Activities in the framework of the implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 promoted transparency and accountability of the public administration towards end users | * + 1. Evidence of successful implementation of key transparency and accountability activities as defined in the revised TC     2. Evidence of fulfilment of the expected direct outputs as defined in the revised TC in the area of transparency and accountability * Public administration has a higher level of accountability at all levels of government * Transparent publication of data held by the public administration for end users   + 1. Evidence and examples of cases where reform measures are listed in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 have contributed or have the potential to contribute to the achievement of the desired outputs of the reform defined in the revised TC: The public administration fulfils its tasks more transparently and responsibly | PARS for the period 2021-2030 and PARS AP for the period 2021-2025; national statistics; progress and impact reports, indicator-based data and analytical reports prepared by national agencies, SIGMA, the European Commission and other development partners or think tanks  Data collected through:   * Interviews and focus group discussions with the following stakeholders: * key state stakeholders (MPALSG, national institutions) * SIGMA, EU, other donors * Civil society   Online surveys with 1) administrative bodies; 2) civil society organisations that are members of the WeBER platform | Review of documents to identify themes for comparison of different documentation sources  Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions  Online surveys | Review of existing studies that identify the main challenges in Serbia  Review of documents listing analyses of capacity gaps and PAR measures  Comparative analysis of key national statistics and strategic documents and reports and other sources  Contribution analysis based on the theory of change comparing activities with results.  Qualitative iterative data analysis, triangulation of data sources |
| Communication and co-ordination  C1.4  Activities carried out as part of the implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 promoted better co-ordination and communications. | * 1. 1 Evidence of fulfilment of the expected direct outputs as defined in the revised TC in the area of communication and co-ordination      1. Established co-ordination and communication mechanism * Evidence and examples of cases where reform measures are listed in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 have contributed or have the potential to contribute to the achievement of the desired outputs of the reform defined in the revised TC: Citizens are better informed about PAR * More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of the PAR | PARS for the period 2021-2030 and PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 years; national statistics;  Annual management plans, progress and impact reports, indicator-based data and analytical reports produced by national authorities, SIGMA, the European Commission and other development partners or think tanks.  Data collected through:   * Interviews and focus group discussions with the following stakeholders: * key state stakeholders (MPALSG, national institutions) * SIGMA, EU, other donors * Civil society   Online surveys with 1) administrative bodies; 2) civil society organisations that are members of the WeBER platform | Review of documents to identify themes for comparison of different documentation sources  Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions  Online surveys | Review of existing studies that identify the main challenges in Serbia  Review of documents listing analyses of capacity gaps and PAR measures  Comparative analysis of key national statistics and strategic documents and reports and other sources  Contribution analysis based on the theory of change comparing activities with results.  Qualitative iterative data analysis, triangulation of data sources |
| C1.5 The reform of public administration has contributed to increasing the professionalism of public administration and the quality of services in accordance with the European Principles of Public Administration. | 1.5.1 Evidence and examples of cases where reform measures are listed in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 have contributed or have the potential to contribute to achieving the desired long-term outcome of the reform as defined in the revised TC:   * A professional administration that creates and ensures the quality of services for citizens and businesses in line with the European Principles for Public Administration | PARS for the period 2021-2030 and PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 years; national statistics;  Annual management plans, progress and impact reports, indicator-based data and analytical reports produced by national authorities, SIGMA, the European Commission and other development partners or think tanks.  Data collected through:   * Interviews and focus group discussions with the following stakeholders: * key state stakeholders (MPALSG, national institutions) * SIGMA, EU, other donors * Civil society   Online surveys with 1) administrative bodies; 2) civil society organisations that are members of the WeBER platform | Review of documents to identify themes for comparison of different documentation sources  Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions  Online surveys | Review of existing studies that identify the main challenges in Serbia  Review of documents listing analyses of capacity gaps and PAR measures  Comparative analysis of key national statistics and strategic documents and reports and other sources  Contribution analysis based on the theory of change comparing activities with results.  Qualitative iterative data analysis, triangulation of data sources |
| *Question 2. What were the main factors that influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives? What obstacles have been encountered in the implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025, to what extent and how have they been overcome?* | | | | |
| C2.1 PARS for the period 2021-2030 has provided reasonable assumptions for the achievement of outputs    C2.2  PARS for the period 2021-2030 has provided appropriate measures to mitigate potential negative factors or risks | 2.1.1 Types of internal drivers of change and the extent to which they have supported the implementation of the reform  2.1.2 Types of external drivers of change and the extent to which they have supported the implementation of the reform    2.2.1 Types of internal barriers and the extent to which they affected the implementation of the reform  2.2.2 Types of external barriers and the extent to which they affected the implementation of the reform  2.2.3 Existence of mechanisms to prevent and/or mitigate obstacles and/or operational delays in the implementation of the reform measures (risk assessment, assumptions and mitigation measures) | PARS for the period 2021-2030 and PARS AP for the period 2021-2025; national statistics;  Annual management plans, progress and impact reports, indicator-based data and analytical reports produced by national authorities, SIGMA, the European Commission and other development partners or think tanks.  Data collected through:   * Interviews and focus group discussions with the following stakeholders: * key state stakeholders (MPALSG, national institutions) * SIGMA, EU, other donors * Civil society   Online surveys with 1) administrative bodies; 2) civil society organisations that are members of the WeBER platform | Review of documents to identify themes for comparison of different documentation sources  Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions  Online surveys | Review of existing studies that identify the main challenges in Serbia  Review of documents listing analyses of capacity gaps and PAR measures  Comparative analysis of key national statistics and strategic documents and reports and other sources  Contribution analysis based on the theory of change comparing activities with results.  Qualitative iterative data analysis, triangulation of data sources |

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## Annex 3. Sectoral analysis - Human Resource Management

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| --- |
| C1.1 Activities carried out as part of the implementation of the PARS AP for the period promoted higher quality management of human resources. |
| In the area of Human Resource Management (hereinafter: HRM), the document review has shown that continuous efforts are being made in this area, primarily through analytical work, the development of the normative framework, and capacity building. These efforts have strived to create high quality foundations for more ambitious reforms planned by the end of the implementation of the Action Plan. In all areas covered by HRM, a solid level of implementation of the planned outputs at activity level was recorded (9 out of 12 indicators were achieved in 2022, i.e. 75%, and 11 out of 13 indicators in 2021, i.e. 85%). However, the analysis has shown that the reforms in the area of professional development are progressing more efficiently. However concrete results in practice are still expected in improving the recruitment process in public administration and building an efficient system for career management, as confirmed by interviews and is visible in the results of the surveys conducted. Accordingly, it is particularly necessary to intensify efforts to draw up a human resources plans based on the authorities' identified staffing needs, to fill posts with people in appointed positions in accordance with the competency framework (reducing the number of staff in acting positions), to set up a human resources development information system (known as HRMIS) and the implementation of the reform of the salary system in the public sector, whose implementation would significantly improve in the existing situation.  The change in the strategic approach made by the PARS created an important basis for the implementation of reforms in HRM. That approach has for the first time brought together all aspects of HRM in one planning document and thus optimised the framework conditions in this area. Such an approach enabled systematic planning and consideration of all important aspects of HRM when setting objectives and an overall view of the outputs achieved. |

The HRM thematic area included in Specific objectives 2, 3 and 4 of the PARS AP covers activities aimed at improving the situation in the said area. These activities should help the Government administration and LSGs attract, recruit and retain competent, efficient and motivated personnel, being the final outcome defined under the reviewed theory of change.

**Finding 1** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.1.1. Evidence of successful implementation of key HRM activities as defined in the revised TC

The analysis of the relevant documentation shows that the main activities to improve HRM and develop a system for the continuous professional development of employees in public administration are being **implemented at a solid level.** As regards the activities planned for 2022 in the area of HRM, taking into account all three specific objectives, a total of 57% of the activities have been implemented, 33% of the activities are still ongoing and 10% have not been implemented. It is important to emphasize that all planned activities related to professional development and professional exams in public administration were successfully implemented.[[79]](#footnote-80)

*Table: Statistics of the report on the implementation of the activities of the PARS AP - thematic area of HRM, for the year 2022 - by specific objective*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Implementation status** | **Number** | **Percentage (%)** |
| Specific objective 2: Improved recruitment process in public administration | | |
| **Total** | **8** |  |
| Implemented | 3 | 38% |
| Ongoing | 4 | 50% |
| Not implemented | 1 | 12% |
| Specific objective 3: Efficient career management system applied in practice | | |
| **Total** | **6** |  |
| Implemented | 2 | 33% |
| Ongoing | 3 | 50% |
| Not implemented | 1 | 17% |
| Specific objective 4: A functional and innovative system of professional development and professional exams in public administration based on the analysis of needs for the improvement of staff competencies, knowledge, skills and abilities developed and applied | | |
| **Total** | **7** | 100% |
| Implemented | 7 |  |
| Ongoing | 0 |  |
| Not implemented | 0 |  |

In the domain of **improving the recruitment process in the public administration** and as part of the implementation of the activity involving the *review of the principles for internal organisation and organisation in the state administration bodies with the aim of more effective staff planning*, a document was prepared with the support of GIZ containing the proposal for the macro-organisation of the staff units in the state administration. It contains proposals for improving the internal organisation and organisation of the state administration with the aim of more effective staff planning. In addition, *a training programme related to the competitive process in the state administration* was prepared *for students completing an internship*. In addition, technical *assistance* was provided to *27 local self-government units to improve the staff planning process.* Bodies, departments and organisations are supported in the development and adoption of work plans for 2023. The help is also provided in the preparation of staff analyses, which are a prerequisite for the preparation of a workforce plan. The staff analysis was conducted according to the form provided in the technical support material. The analysis included all foreseeable changes for 2023. The heads of bodies, services and organisations as well as employees of HRM units took part in this process. A workshop was also held with the relevant LSG representatives on monitoring and reporting on HRM plan implementation. This activity included the preparation of forms to accompany the preparation and execution, i.e. implementation, of the staff plan, which was fully implemented.

In accordance with the deadlines from the Action Plan, the most important activities **to improve an efficient career management system** have yet to be implemented. As far as 2022 is concerned, the analysis of the documentation has shown that two activities have been implemented.A *comparative analysis of the models of engagement of civil servants in international projects and the implementation of their role in the EU accession process*, with a proposal for a model for the state administration of the Republic of Serbia. *An analysis of the internship of civil servants in related EU member institutions and EU institutions* was also carried out. In addition, in the third quarter of 2022, *guidelines and recommendations for the state administration bodies to improve the quality of the evaluation of civil servants' work performance* were developed.On the other hand, *the analysis of the organisation of the HRM function in the AP and LSG bodies and the determination of future development directions in accordance with modern forms of HRM* has not been started. Moreover, funds for its implementation have not been allocated. Consequently, the implementation of the policy on the management of civil servants in the normative framework has been postponed to Q4 2025, as previously planned activities have not been implemented.

In the area of **developing and implementing a functional and innovative system of professional development and professional examinations in public administration**, all seven planned activities were implemented in 2022. Firstly, a *training programme was developed and tailored to the needs of trainees and people training to work independently in their profession*. In addition, a *performance evaluation and a review of the law regulating the field of professional development in state institutions and professional development in the institutions of local self-government units* (ex-post analysis of the law) were carried out. In order to further improve the normative framework regulating the area of professional development in the public administration, a series of analyses were carried out to collect information on how the system works.[[80]](#footnote-81) It is particularly important to point out that a platform for distance learning has been set up, *using multimedia and interactive online learning methods* (group work with live sessions, forums, joint exercises in Blackboard systems - virtual classrooms, work on joint projects, learning in a “face-to-face” environment, “compulsory socialising” at the end of the training). Its aim was to ensure the conditions for the application of this form of professional development in all areas of vocational training in the public administration. The activities mentioned were rated as particularly positive by the respondents. At the same time, an ex-ante analysis of the law which will regulate the area of professional examinations in the state administration system on a unified basis has been carried out.

As for the **activities implemented in 2021**, the analysis of the relevant documentation showed that out of the total of 17 planned activities, 15 have been implemented, while the implementation of two activities is still ongoing.[[81]](#footnote-82) In the area of improving the recruitment process in public the administration, three activities have been fully completed, i.e. 75% of the activities have been implemented, while 25% have not yet been completed. The activities related to improving an efficient career management system achieved excellent results, as all four planned activities were achieved, resulting in a 100% implementation rate. In the area of developing and implementing a functional and innovative system of professional development and professional examinations in public administration, a total of eight activities were implemented, i.e. 89%, while 11% were not yet completed.

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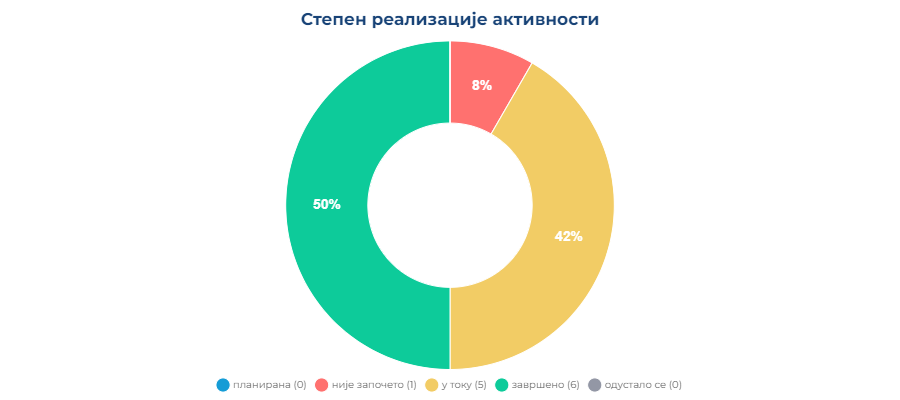
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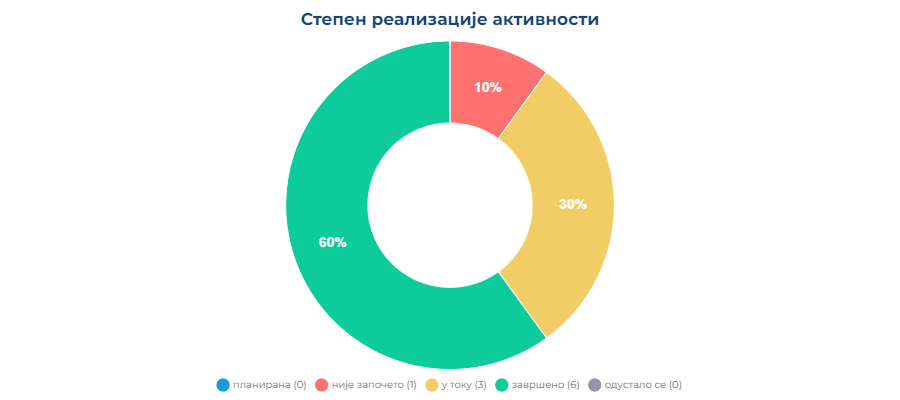
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Finally, with regard to the current status of implementation of the activities planned by the PARS AP by the end of 2022, an overview of all three specific objectives in the HRM area is provided below.

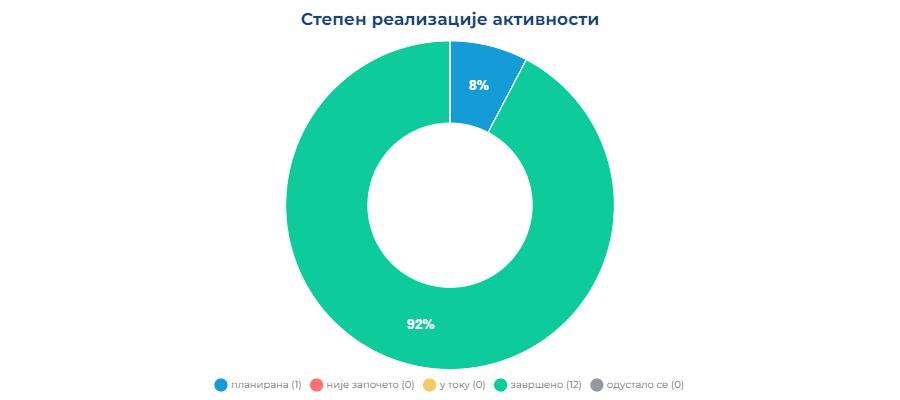
*Graph: Degree of implementation of activities for Specific objective 2: Improved recruitment process in public administration[[82]](#footnote-83)*



*Graph: Degree of implementation of activities for Specific objective 3: Efficient career management system applied in practice[[83]](#footnote-84)*



*Graph: Degree of implementation of activities for Specific objective 4: Functioning and innovative system of professional development and professional examinations in public administration*[[84]](#footnote-85)

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**Finding 2** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.1.2 Evidence of fulfilment of the expected outputs as defined in the revised TC in the area of human resources development: *Better management of human resources and better and more efficient work of civil servants*

A review of the relevant documentation shows that in the overall thematic area of HRM **most of the planned results at the level of measures were achieved in both years observed** - in 2022, the target values were achieved for 9 out of 12 measures (75%), while in 2021 this was the case for 11 out of a total of 13 measures (85%). However, the analysis has shown that the reforms **in the area of professional development are progressing more efficiently. However concrete results in practice are still expected in improving the recruitment process in the public administration and building an efficient system for career management, as confirmed by interviews.**

In terms of outputs related to **improving the recruitment process in the public administration**, important progress has been made towards standardising the civil service system at all levels through the creation of the *Competency framework for employees in LSGs and AP and its inclusion in the normative framework*, as well as supporting LSGUs in workforce planning (see details under Finding 1), which was confirmed in the interviews as an important step. Since the attractiveness of the civil service as an employer was considered low[[85]](#footnote-86) by SIGMA, activities in this direction were initiated. The *Communication plan for promotional activities of the Human Resources Management Service* (hereinafter: HRMS) was devised and is being implemented. The *Student Internship Fair in public administration*, which has been organised for two years, proved to be one of the good examples of promoting the state administration to young people. On the other hand, although the innovative personnel planning methodology in the state administration has been developed and piloted in 4 state administration bodies, there is still a lack of concrete results in the form of a staff plan. A certain shift can be seen in the *filling of positions by people in appointed positions according to the competency framework* - the percentage of filled positions by people in appointed positions according to the competency framework increased from 34% (2020) to 40% (2021) to 46% (2022), but the results are still below the planned level (e.g. 60% is planned for 2022). The interviewees attributed the result in 2022, which was worse than planned, partly to the fact that in most of 2022 the Government had a technical mandate in which it cannot appoint personnel to positions once the selection has been completed. It should also be noted that due to the formation of a new government, the *analysis of the legal framework regulating the procedure and authorisation to appoint an acting official, as well as the proposals of measures for improvement*, were not completed within the prescribed deadline. The deadline for the development of guidelines for the improvement of enactments on systematisation in the field of job descriptions and required competencies for senior civil servants, as well as for the renewal of the framework of competencies for officials in appointed positions, has been postponed to the 4th quarter of 2023 (the original deadline was the 4th quarter of 2022). In general, respondents believe that the current recruitment system has the potential to be more efficient. However, they think it is still too bureaucratic and burdened with procedures that do not always produce the desired results. The European Commission's report on the progress of the Republic of Serbia for 2022 states that *there has been no progress in the implementation of mandatory competition procedures for recruiting of temporary staff* in cases of increased workload and that the resolution of this issue has been postponed from 2021 to 2023. According to the Law on Amendments to the Law on Civil Servants, adopted in December 2022, the obligation to implement mandatory competition procedures for the employment of persons for a fixed period of time was postponed to 2025. In addition, there are still concerns about the possible conversion of fixed-term contracts into indefinite contracts, which needs further careful consideration.[[86]](#footnote-87) The interviews confirmed the need to systematically regulate and solve the mentioned problem. The respondents also pointed out that hiring a person for a certain period of time was the only solution during the employment moratorium.

Regarding **the improvement of the career management system**, according to the European Commission's report on the progress of the Republic of Serbia for 2022 with the competency-based HR management system, *the success rate of competencies tested remains extremely high.* The HRMS needs to further strengthen its capacity to co-ordinate and harmonise the work of HR departments in sectoral institutions. There are still no annual reporting and no reliable statistics since the establishment of a new Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS) has been delayed, as confirmed by respondents.[[87]](#footnote-88) *The reform of the salary system in the public sector has not yet been implemented*, although it has been postponed several times, so the new expected date for the start of implementation is the end of 2025. There has been a delay in the preparation of the analysis of the HRM function in public agencies with suggestions for improvement - the first draft of the said analysis has been prepared and the continuation is planned for 2023 with the support of SIGMA. As part of the Centre for Career Management, which is based at the HRMS, an offer for individual and team coaching was developed to strengthen the capacities of all civil servants, especially managers. In addition, an Action Plan to strengthen the capacity of HR units in the state administration bodies has been developed. It is still being implemented to help transform the traditional role of personnel units into modern HRM units. The analysis has also shown that initial activities have been undertaken to improve the work of senior civil servants through the development and implementation of a specially created training programme. The development of competency-based training for managers and HR units has been successfully implemented. The interviews confirmed that the activities related to improving the career management system have so far produced limited results.

Finally, as regards the outputs defined by the revised TC in relation to the **development and implementation of a functional and innovative system of professional development and professional examinations in public administration**, the analysis shows *stable progress and the effectiveness of the reforms in this area.* *Professional development programmes, as well as their implementation, are constantly being improved*, while progress is also being made in *standardising and improving the implementation of professional examinations in the public administration.* The National Academy of Public Administration continues to organise trainings for all civil servants, including LSGU employees, with *the number of participants continuously increasing and a high percentage of participants satisfied with the trainings, especially those involving the application of innovative methods*. According to the respondents, great progress has been made in this area, especially compared to the period a few years ago. The *co-operation with higher education institutions*, which was established during the implementation of the Action Plan and is improving year on year, was particularly praised. A confirmation of the efforts made is *the special prize of the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) and OECD/SIGMA* for the empowerment and employment of young people, the Student Professional Practice in Public Administration Fair 2021/2022 in which more than 50 projects from administrations from the Western Balkans region competed.

**Finding 3** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.1.3 Evidence and examples of cases where reform measures are listed in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 have contributed or have the potential to contribute to the achievement of the desired outputs of the reform defined in the revised TC: *State administration and LSGs attract, hire and retain competent, efficient and motivated staff.*

**Although the commitment to improving the HRM is visible through the efforts shown, this segment of the PAR is still not at the desired level.** As mentioned above, the analysis of the relevant documentation has shown that solid results have been achieved at the level of implementation of the actions foreseen by the PARS AP. However, the main results have not yet been achieved in practice, as confirmed by interviews. In this sense, it is necessary to take more ambitious reform steps in order to achieve more concrete outputs by the end of the Action Plan. The above findings are particularly evident in the example of some particularly significant outputs that are expected in this area, namely: recruitment of staff based on the expressed staffing needs of the institution; filling of vacancies of persons in the position according to the competency framework (reduction in the number of persons in the position in acting capacity); implementation of the public sector payroll system reform; and establishment of the HRMIS. On the other hand, there is a strong potential to contribute to the achievement of the desired outcomes of the reform defined by the revised TC in the field of professional development, where the reforms are implemented much more efficiently, but also the full application of the established competency framework at all levels. Finally, it is important to point out that, following SIGMA's assessment, criteria such as the retention of newly recruited civil servants and the efficiency of the recruitment process have improved.[[88]](#footnote-89)

## Annex 4. Sectoral analysis - Services

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| --- |
| C1.2 Activities carried out as part of the implementation of the PARS AP promoted development, application and control of services |
| The review of the documentation shows a considerable level of implementation of the activities of the Republic of Serbia when it comes to the reform of public administration and especially the segment of service provision. This is also confirmed both by the reports of the European Commission, in which the progress is rated as moderate, and in the international context by the achievement of high results in terms of the development index, especially e-Government (United Nations e-Government Development Index, GovTech Maturity Index - GTMI of the World Bank, e-Government Benchmark of the European Commission). The greatest progress from year to year has been in the area of e-Government, but also in accessibility (e.g. 55 physical one-stop-shops, the expansion of the number of services on the e-Government Portal <https://euprava.gov.rs/> and the optimisation of the services offered (e.g. Registry of Administrative Procedures <https://rap.euprava.gov.rs/privreda/home>). These findings were also confirmed by the stakeholders interviewed. The analysis shows that additional efforts are needed to achieve results in the area of controlling and monitoring the quality of service provision - the need for a centralised approach; clear co-ordination mechanisms in the area of service provision; the establishment of a system for continuous measurement of service user satisfaction, in order to unify and standardise service provision. |

**Finding 1** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.2.1 Evidence of successful implementation of key activities as defined under the revised TC

**The analysis confirmed that significant progress has been made in the implementation of the PARS AP in the area of service delivery. This is particularly evident when it comes to creating a strategic framework for public administration reform for 2021-2030 that is more end-user-centred, with a focus on service delivery, especially e-services. In addition, the Republic of Serbia has not only passed relevant laws and by-laws, but progress has also been recorded in practice.** As for the activities of the Republic of Serbia in the field of service provision for the year 2022, the commitment is reflected in the implementation of 45% of the planned activities (36% are underway and only 18% have not yet been implemented), thus achieving 80% of the outcomes in the previous period within this thematic area.[[89]](#footnote-90) The interviews with CSOs and the analysis of documents produced by CSOs, such as the Report of the National PAR Monitoring Serbia[[90]](#footnote-91) for the observed period of analysis, underlined that the strategic and legal framework in the field of PAR and service provision is something that has been continuously worked on (PAR Strategy, e-Government Development Programme, Programme for Simplification of Administrative Procedures and Regulations (e-PAPER), Law on General Administrative Procedures, Law on Electronic Government, Law on Electronic Documents, Electronic Identification and Trusted Services in Electronic Commerce, etc.). The CSOs also mentioned that the introduction and application of the “once-only” principle was of particular importance. It enables natural and legal persons to submit data from official documents to the decision-making bodies only once during the administrative procedure, whereupon the authorities take measures for the internal exchange of documents and data. Furthermore, in 2022, the national e-Government Portal was upgraded with additional services. Now it serves as a central point and counter for e-Government services for citizens and businesses.[[91]](#footnote-92) In addition, by 2022, a complete set of regulations implementing the Law on e-Government was adopted, the number of unique administrative posts at the level of local self-government units was increased and the number of databases connected to the public administration service bus was raised.[[92]](#footnote-93) These steps have been recognised as crucial for further progress in the development of public services.

Through interviews with CSOs and analysis of documents prepared by CSOs, it is confirmed that the public administration, especially e-Government, has proven to be effective, especially during the Covid pandemic, in terms of providing services in the context of restricted movement. During this period, the Republic of Serbia reallocated resources and digitised all services related to the Covid pandemic. It made them available in a special part of the e-Government portal. Some of the digital services related to the pandemic include applications for PCR testing or vaccination, which have been appropriately promoted through traditional and digital media. In addition, the Republic of Serbia is the winner of most awards for the Western Balkans in 2020, bestowed by RESPA and OECD/ SIGMA in the field of public administration reform with a special focus on the response to the Covid pandemic. The RS was awarded with four out of 11 awards: two in the field of e-Government, one in the field of economy and one in the e-health category, namely for improving service delivery during the pandemic, the ability to adapt to the context and ensure continuity (of service delivery), providing communication and information mechanisms, establishing control mechanisms and monitoring the spread of infection, ensuring business continuity during the crisis thanks to tools such as the e-market and the contact centre e-inspector.[[93]](#footnote-94)

Positive examples related to the response to the Covid pandemic can be seen in the work of the entire public administration. A number of activities have been undertaken to best manage the consequences of the Covid pandemic. Some of these include the establishment of a single contact centre that serves as a central point of contact for reporting illegal activities to the inspectorates, where citizens can call a specific telephone number or submit reports electronically. In this way, over 15,000 reports have been collected, mainly for market, labour and tax inspections.[[94]](#footnote-95) In addition, the unique Contact Centre was connected to all local administrations and a communication channel was established with the Contact Centre for republic inspections, through which citizens and businesses can quickly obtain the information relevant to them. Moreover, a working group for the co-ordination of republic inspections within the Co-ordination Commission for Inspection Control was established to implement measures to suppress Covid 19. It was also supposed to implement Covid 19 restrictive measures, resulting in almost 210,000 inspections in three months. A Centre for Covid 19 Measures was established, where users could find the latest, revised versions of the measures and accurate information.[[95]](#footnote-96)

When it comes to specific activities under the measure *Improving the development of services tailored to end users by improving the process of developing new and optimising existing services* (and under the specific objective of the PAR strategy: *Public administration provides efficient and innovative services that meet the needs of end users and improve their user experience*), several activities were completed within the deadline (2022). However, an additional deadline for completion was set for a larger number. The activities include in particular: defining the methodology for developing new or optimising existing services based on the systematic involvement of end users at all stages of development using advanced and innovative tools; setting standards for the establishment of clear administrative posts; a detailed list of all steps and elements of administrative procedures related to citizens through the register of administrative procedures carried out by the SABs; the establishment of a legal framework for the systematic involvement of users in the development/design of (new and existing) services at all stages of development (Regulation on the principles of service and information management).[[96]](#footnote-97) In addition, as part of the action *to increase the human and technical-technological capacity of the public administration to provide services to end-users*, two activities have been finalised (implementation of training for civil servant on the use of the national e-Government Portal for service provision and implementation of an online training course “Creative user-centred design of services and policies”). The activities that have not yet been started, and have a deadline until 2023, are the development of a training plan for the improvement of employees in accordance with the results of an analysis and strategic definition of the RS Government; and conducting trainings on the application of standards for the provision of public services. Implementing various tasks such as developing a methodology to determine roles and the workforce engaged in public service-related professions; analysing the availability and structure of human resources in state and local administration for public service provision; enhancing the technical and technological resources of the Administrative Inspection; bolstering the Inspection's capacity to monitor service standards' implementation for internal quality control; and aiding the Ministry responsible for service policies in ensuring service quality effectively—all these tasks have either been deferred or remain unimplemented as per the original plan. Also, as a part of *Improving the control system and ensuring service quality*, four activities were accomplished. These included establishing a legal framework mandating a comprehensive and updated electronic registry for administrative procedures/services as a public register, implementing quality management through the CAF, assessing the current system for monitoring, control and ensuring quality public administration services analysing international best practices in that area, and recognising the necessity to enhance physical accessibility to services for vulnerable and marginalised groups and minority communities ensuring physical access and territorial accessibility of services. However, no activities have been launched concerning the implementation of a methodology to measure the outputs/performance of public service providers or the implementation of a methodology to measure end-user satisfaction with public administration services (both electronic and traditional).[[97]](#footnote-98)

**Finding 2** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.2.2 Evidence of fulfilment of the expected direct outputs as defined in the reviewed TC: *A system for the development, implementation and control of services has been established*

**The outputs of the reform activities manifest in multiple anticipated domains, particularly in service provision (creating new services, refining existing ones, establishing one-stop-shops—both physical and electronic—and laying an analytical and planning basis for service development). However additional efforts are needed to achieve outputs in some areas (control and monitoring of the quality of service provision or a centralised approach (centralised institutions) that would provide citizens with systematic and uniform access to services).** In 2022, the Republic of Serbia has achieved significant outputs (74% implemented and 26% not implemented) at the level of outcomes envisaged under the PARS.[[98]](#footnote-99) Among the activities outlined in the PAR Strategy to enhance service development catering to end-users by refining the process for new services and improving existing ones, a notable achievement has been *the preparation and adoption of the planning framework* (e-Government Development Programme with its Action Plan for the period 2023-2025; Programme for the simplification of administrative procedures and regulations (e-PAPER) for the period 2023-2025; preparation of the Plan for the provision of priority administrative services in crisis situations to ensure the continuity of service provision in times of crisis, such as the Covid epidemic).

Concrete results are visible **through the opening of one-stop-shops**. According to MPALSG, 345 million dinars of budget funds have so far been invested in the establishment of 55 one-stop-shops in Serbia, through 6 public calls. In the period from September 2019 to September 2023, one-stop-shops were opened in 41 local self-government units, while 14 new ones are expected to be opened by the end of 2023, which represents almost a third of LSGUs in the RS.[[99]](#footnote-100)  
The results achieved in the **area of e-service provision** include the following achievements: the number of e-Government Portal users increased from 320,000 to 1,150,576 in the period between 2020 and 2021; the number of open data portal users increased from 1,050 to 1,498 in the same period; the number of available electronic services increased from 140 to 196; the total number of citizens accessing services via the e-Government Portal increased from 1,100,000 to 2.253.547; a record number of data was exchanged electronically (55,400,000), reducing the number of direct visits to the counter; 19 physical one-stop-shops were opened at the local level where citizens can complete several tasks in one place.[[100]](#footnote-101) The results achieved for the number of registers and software solutions migrated to data centres also exceeded the target values, while the number of qualified electronic seals issued is below the target value.[[101]](#footnote-102) In 2022, the results were even better:the number of implemented services on the e-Government Portal totalled 7,089,423 for 2022, a significant increase compared to 2021, when there were 2,253,547. The number of services on the e-Government Portal has increased significantly. 340 services are available to users of that portal (G2G, G2B, G2C), 80% of which belong to the fourth expansion stage. There are no first or second level services on the portal (e.g. only downloadable forms or only information). Every service available on the portal aligns with sophistication levels categorised as 3rd, 4th, or 5th. All services on the portal allow at least the submission of an electronic form, while most steps are carried out electronically, including electronic payment. Some services are fully automated, such as the e-Baby service, which is available in maternity clinics and requires no action from the user, only their consent to provide the service. The availability of services has improved in recent times as the number of digitally available services has increased and the availability and accessibility of key users has increased. The e-Pay service enables simple and uncomplicated payment of administrative services. The number of citizens using their own electronic mailbox has increased many times over. It was planned that 100,000 citizens would use this service in 2022. This figure was significantly exceeded and reached 1,524,915, while 787,110 citizens used this service in 2021. The number of civil servants using the e-Government infrastructure has almost tripled, in 2021 it was 10,000 and in 2022 27,405.[[102]](#footnote-103)Two state data centres were opened in the past period, in Belgrade and Kragujevac. State IT access centres or hubs were opened - SKIP centres in Belgrade <http://skipcentar.rs/sr_RS/> and in Niš.

*A diagram of a computer mouse

Description automatically generated*



A graph of statistics on a white background

Description automatically generated



Furthermore, the Republic of Serbia is well positioned in terms of e-Government in an international context. According to the United Nations e-Government Development Index, it ranks 40th out of 193 countries in 2022 (58th in 2020[[103]](#footnote-104)), with an index of 0.82 out of a maximum of 1.[[104]](#footnote-105) Also, according to the World Bank's GovTech Maturity Index (GTMI) for 2022, which measures digital transformation in the public sector, the Republic of Serbia is among the leading countries in this area, along with 62 other countries.[[105]](#footnote-106) As far as Europe is concerned, the *e-Government Benchmark Report* for 2021 shows that the Republic of Serbia has made moderate progress compared to European countries in the area of e-Government development. Progress was noted in three of the four assessment areas: user-centredness of e-services, transparency and key enablers for e-Government development. The baseline value of the indicator in 2019 is 41%, in 2020 - 43.9%, while in 2021 the Republic of Serbia is the leader in the region with a total of 49.8% of the indicator values achieved.[[106]](#footnote-107)

Through the implementation of the Programme “e-Paper”**, the total of 400 existing administrative procedures for business were optimised, 21 procedures were abolished, resulting in annual savings of 32 million euros for the economy.** More than 500 processes are currently being optimised, 496 are already partially optimised. End users are involved in the optimisation process. 86 services have already been digitised and published, and another 10 will be published shortly. A further 32 business processes have been selected as part of the Green Agenda for digitalisation. We expect them to be digitalised by the end of June 2024. Currently, digital services for companies are available on several portals and websites (Business Registers Agency, Central Register of Compulsory Social Insurance, e-Tax). The Business Registers Agency portal has been integrated into the single sign-on to the national e-ID portal since January 2023, while the activities on the integration of the remaining portals are ongoing, with the aim of improving the user experience. We are working on integrating the other portals to improve the user experience. Annual financial statements can now be signed with cloud signatures.[[107]](#footnote-108)

By the establishment of the Portal of the Register of Administrative Procedures, 3082 public services (G2B, G2C) at the 2nd level of digital sophistication have been made available to the citizens and the economy of the Republic of Serbia on a single Portal. In addition, 837 services on the Portal are at the 3rd, 4th or 5th level of sophistication, i.e. a connection which enables that the services can be launched from a single Portal has been made.

**As part of the improved quality assurance system for the provision of services, the implementation of the European instrument for quality management in public administration - CAF** - was initiated and completed in 8 state institutions (Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, Office for Combating Drugs, Accreditation Body of Serbia, Ministry for Public Investment Management, Republic Agency for Peaceful Settlement of Labour Disputes, Mine Action Centre, Office for Public Procurement and Human Resources Management Service). In addition to the introduction of quality management, capacity building was carried out so that 3 trainings for trainers (19 employees) were held, 6 employees were internationally certified for conducting PEF quality assessments, 3 video tutorials on CAF were created, both for the general public and for the training of all civil servants.[[108]](#footnote-109) Regular promotional activities were carried out (the website <https://caf.mduls.gov.rs/> with all materials in Serbian, brochures, an online questionnaire, examples of good practices, two CAF information days and several promotional videos).

To approach the methodology of user involvement in the development/design of (new and existing) services at all stages of development, a video training on *customer journey mapping* was created and uploaded to NAPA's online system for civil servant training. The video was also uploaded to the website of the Serbian-Korean Information Access Centre in Belgrade to spread knowledge and awareness among the public (<https://skipcentar.rs/e-learning/story.html>).

In the area of **the improved system for controlling and monitoring the quality of service provision**, the development of the analytical basis for the area of service provision was co-ordinated. Namely the following analyses were made:

* The situation in the area of one-stop-shops for the provision of public services in Serbia;
* Consultancy report for the future model of one-stop-shop in Serbia;
* European best practices in public service standards for the improvement of service standards;
* Mapping the development of quality standards for public service delivery in Serbia (status, shortcomings and needs);
* Serbia's roadmap for improving public service standards;
* Study on the accessibility of public services;
* Guidelines for the development of a plan for the continuity of the provision of priority public administration services in crisis situations.

The above analyses form the basis for the work on the Regulation on Standards for one-stop-shops.[[109]](#footnote-110)

Interviews with CSOs and the analysis of documents prepared by CSOs, such as the report of the National PAR Monitoring Serbia[[110]](#footnote-111), have identified the necessity for additional enhancement and broader utilisation of specific public administration services, which also possess corresponding legal frameworks. These improvements might occur through the establishment of centralised access - the absence of which significantly restricts consistent service application - or through end-users' systematic utilisation or increased efforts to promote public administration services. Regarding the need for effective implementation of the legal and strategic framework, the analysis notes that even the most important documents, such as the PAR Strategy, the e-Government Development Programme or the "e-PAPER" programme for simplifying administrative procedures and regulations, *lack clear co-ordination mechanisms in the areas of service provision, which leads to their unsystematic implementation.*[[111]](#footnote-112) *A lack of activities to establish a system for continuous measurement of service user satisfaction* was identified**.**

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| An example of good practice:  In the competition between 18 European countries as part of the global competition of the *Open Government Partnership*  *Impact Awards*  the "e-PAPER" programme for the simplification of administrative procedures and regulations won second place **as the reform with the greatest impact on citizens and the economy**. <https://rb.gy/7599m> |  |

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| An example of good practice:  In less than six years of operation, the SKIP centre in Belgrade **has provided more than 4,000 free training courses and trained around 80,000 citizens**. In 2021, it was awarded the Golden Plaque as the most successful centre of its kind in the world. In total, there are 55 centres operating thanks to the support of the Republic of Korea. **http://skipcentar.rs/** | http://skipcentar.rs/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/DSC_5397.jpg |

**Finding 3** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.2.3Evidence and examples of cases where reform measures are listed in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 have contributed or have the potential to contribute to the achievement of the desired outputs of the reform defined in the revised TC: *End users are satisfied with the public services provided*

**The documentation confirms the recognition of progress when it comes, for example, to the speed of receiving services and the development of e-Government. The Balkan Barometer survey shows that overall satisfaction with public services in Serbia**[[112]](#footnote-113) **is stable** (answers to the questions: I am completely satisfied in 2022 and 2023 - 7 and in 2021 - 8, I am mostly satisfied in 2021, 2022 and 2023 - 39). The same stability is observed in the question about the accessibility of public services and satisfaction with the administrative services provided by the central administration.[[113]](#footnote-114)

The surveys carried out as part of this analysis show that the civil society organisations surveyed are largely of the opinion that there has been progress “to a lesser extent” in the area of satisfaction with the services provided (in response to the question *How do you rate progress in terms of the following results - are end users satisfied with the services provided? - Annex 11. Analysis of the survey for civil society).* In response to the question “How do you assess the changes in the provision of administrative services when you compare 2021 and 2023?”,there is an equal number of people who judge that they have improved to some extent and that there is no improvement (*Annex 11. Analysis of the survey for civil society.)* Through interviews with CSOs and the analysis of documents produced by CSOs, such as the Report of the National PAR Monitoring Serbia[[114]](#footnote-115) for the observed period, the analyses show the perception is confirmed that accessibility to public services has improved and that there is still room for progress in terms of insufficient territorial distribution and options for easier use of administrative authorities' websites, especially when it comes to vulnerable groups, e.g. people with disabilities, which is probably due to insufficient training of civil servants to work with these groups. The establishment of one-stop-shops, which facilitate and standardise the process of providing different services in one place, was seen as very useful and positive when it comes to the accessibility of services for citizens. However, respondents emphasised the need to ensure that different groups of citizens have adequate access to information and services. Issues of digital literacy, as well as general accessibility and understanding of how citizens can receive an adequate service, remain crucial for the public administration as a basis for further public administration reform efforts. It has been noted in the interviews that there is a need to adopt by-laws on service standards to standardise the application of all services, regardless of where they are provided.

## Annex 5. Sectoral Analysis - Accountability and Transparency

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| C1.3 Activities realised through the implementation of the PARS AP have promoted transparency and accountability of the public administration towards end users. |
| The analysis of the available documentation has shown that the implementation of the PARS AP has achieved limited results in terms of improving the accountability and transparency of the public administration towards end-users, with better results in the area of transparency, which was also confirmed by interviews. The majority of civil servants surveyed believe that progress in this area has been solid or limited, while the majority of CSOs also see less progress when it comes to more transparent and accountable performance of tasks by the public administration.  In general, it can be said that steps are being taken towards the introduction and/or strengthening of the principles of accountability and transparency of public administration. However, the results in practice are not yet sufficient to make significant progress and are often to be read in formal regulations rather than in the accompanying practical application. Despite certain analytical steps towards looking at the current situation and the capacity-building process that has been initiated, systemic solutions that would fundamentally improve accountability in the actions of public administration bodies have not yet been established and thus have not been brought to life in practice. There have also been positive results in the area of transparency (e.g. an improved legal framework in the area of access to information of public importance and the remit of the Ombudsman, an increase in the number of bodies publishing data on the Open Data Portal). Yet the practice of administrative bodies responding to the actions of independent bodies still varies considerably.  Certainly, it is important to note that a number of measures have been implemented with the potential to lead to more accountability and transparency in public administration, such as delegation of responsibility through the appointment of authorised representatives to conduct administrative procedures; taking into account the objectives outlined in the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Government Programme when developing medium-term plans of state administration bodies and thus bolstering both the vertical and the horizontal system of controlling and monitoring public administration work; enhancing the ethical standards and integrity of employees within the state administration by building their capacity; and the constant growth in the number of authorities that publish data on the Open Data Portal. |

The thematic area of accountability and transparency, included in Specific objective 6 of the PARS AP, contains activities focused on the improvement of conditions in the mentioned areas. These activities serve to contribute to a more transparent and accountable exercise of responsibilities by the public administration, as defined as the ultimate goal in the revised theory of change. To this end, in the part relating to **improving the accountability of the public administration**, steps are planned towards systematic development and capacity building in the area of managerial accountability in the public administration, improving mechanisms and capacities for performance-based management and in relation to the development of ethical standards and mechanisms for monitoring the ethical behaviour of civil servants. In the part related to **improving the transparency of the work of public administration bodies and acting in accordance with the regulations from the field of work of independent state bodies**, the PARS AP focuses on strengthening the capacities of civil servants to improve the transparency of work; implementing the participation of the Republic of Serbia in the Open Government Partnership initiative through the adoption of national action plans; strengthening the legal framework for improving accountability and transparency in the work of public authorities by improving the regulations in the area of access to information of public importance and the scope of duties of the Ombudsman; and improving the monitoring of the implementation of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance by strengthening the capacities of the competent authorities.

Ultimately, when reviewing the attained results and the level of implementation of the PARS AP concerning accountability and transparency, it is crucial to acknowledge that “some aspects within this thematic domain are specifically overseen by the revised Action Plan for Negotiating Chapter 23, the Judicial Development Strategy for 2020-2025, and the Public Financial Management Reform Programme”[[115]](#footnote-116), whose results are not subject of this analysis. In this sense, it is important not to rule out the possibility that the implementation of these aforementioned planning documents led to additional results.

**Finding 1** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.3.1 Evidence of successful implementation of key transparency and accountability activities as defined in the revised TC

The analysis has shown that in the observed period (January 2021-June 2023) there is **a delay compared to the planned deadlines for the implementation of key activities in the area of accountability. It is particularly evident in the part concerning the development of the managerial accountability system in public administration bodies. Still the area of transparency records progress, mainly in the form of improving the legal framework for the operation of independent state bodies.**

With regard to the sub-area of **accountability**, concerning *the development of managerial accountability in public administration bodies*, a comprehensive analysis of the current situation[[116]](#footnote-117) has been prepared. However, the development of guidelines with a specific roadmap is still at the proposal stage, as confirmed by interviews. In September 2023, the Government formed a Working Group on Managerial Accountability. It created the conditions for an in-depth examination of the proposed document and all other issues through close cooperation and co-ordination between the main bodies in this area. In view of this, the work to harmonise the legal framework with the above-mentioned guidelines and to define clear areas of responsibility within the public administration, which logically and chronologically follow the preparation of the above-mentioned analysis, could not be started within the deadlines provided for in the PARS AP. Initial steps have been taken to *strengthen the ability of managers to apply the principles of managerial accountability* by establishing an online training course for managers on the “Fundamentals of Managerial Accountability”, which has been an integral part of the training programme for managers in state bodies[[117]](#footnote-118) and the training programme for managers in local self-government units since 2022.[[118]](#footnote-119) Considering that the above-mentioned training has been conducted since 2022, available data show that 272 managers in state institutions have attended the training[[119]](#footnote-120) during the same period and that managers from 2.36% of public administration bodies, independent government agencies and LSGUs have attended training on the implementation principles of managerial accountability.[[120]](#footnote-121) In line with the deadlines from the PARS AP, key activities *to improve performance management mechanisms and capacities* have yet to be implemented (most activities have an implementation deadline in Q4 2023) However their implementation largely depend on the dynamics of work on the managerial accountability roadmap, which includes the issue of performance management, as clarified in interviews. An exception is the trainings for managers on the application of a standardised performance management methodology. Its implementation began in 2022 and in which managers from 1.38% of state administration bodies, independent state agencies and LSGUs have so far participated.[[121]](#footnote-122) Finally, in order *to improve ethical standards and mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the rules for ethical behaviour of civil servants*, an analysis of the content of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants and the procedures for data collection and reporting[[122]](#footnote-123) has been prepared.

The study on the introduction of ethics and integrity officers in the public administration of the Republic of Serbia is currently being developed. It will be followed by activities related to the piloting of a project for the appointment of ethics and integrity officers in a selected number of public administration bodies, which will also include the preparation and implementation of training programmes for these officers.

As regards the sub-area of **transparency, including acting in accordance with regulations from the area of work of independent state bodies**, two important normative activities were successfully implemented, aiming to further *strengthen the legal framework for improving accountability and transparency in the work of public authorities.* Amendments to the Law on Amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance[[123]](#footnote-124) and the new Law on the Ombudsman[[124]](#footnote-125) were adopted. A new instruction for the production and publication of information on the work of public bodies[[125]](#footnote-126) has also been drawn up. It envisages that information on the work be produced in electronic and machine-readable form, thus reaffirming the principle of proactive transparency as a means of exercising the right of access to information and expanding the scope of information published. In addition, in February 2022, the new unified information system of labour information booklets was put into operation, where all relevant information on the work of the authorities can be found in one place.[[126]](#footnote-127) In the area of *strengthening the capacity of civil servants to improve openness of work of public bodies (transparency)*, a training module on open data standards, their reuse and working with the Open Data Portal has been developed. It is being continuously organised. Since 2021, when the module was developed, these trainings have been attended by participants from 67 different public administration bodies, out of a total of 723 registered on the LMS platform of the National Academy of Public Administration.[[127]](#footnote-128) In other words: In 2021, employees from 8.57% of state administration bodies and local self-government units participated in trainings on open data standards and working with the Open Data Portal, while this percentage increased to 9.27% in 2022.[[128]](#footnote-129) The development of manuals/guides for managers on the positive impact of increasing public administration transparency and the creation of the Public Administration e-Information booklets of bodies is underway and is expected to be completed by the end of 2023, in line with the deadlines set in the PARS AP. The Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government continued to co-ordinate *the participation of the Republic of Serbia in the Open Government Partnership Initiative*, including the development of a new OGP Action Plan for the period 2023-2027. The new OGP Action Plan is being prepared and its adoption is expected by the end of 2023.[[129]](#footnote-130) It is planned to adopt a four-year action plan instead of two two-year action plans (for the period 2022-2024 and the period 2024-2026). From the interviews, it emerged that activities have been undertaken *to strengthen the Commissioner's capacity in general, as well as to monitor the implementation of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance*, mainly through the opening of the Commissioner's offices in Novi Sad and Niš, while the new office in Kragujevac is scheduled to open in autumn 2023. In addition, the Commissioner no longer has to obtain the approval of the National Assembly's Administrative Committee for its systematisation, as it was the case in previous years, but only submits the systematisation and informs the National Assembly about it, which has been done. A public selection procedure is currently underway to fill 26 posts in the Commissioner's technical service.

**Findings 2. and 3** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.3.2 Evidence of fulfilment of the expected direct outputs as defined in the reviewed TC: *Public administration has a higher level of accountability at all levels of government/Transparent publication of data held by public administration bodies to end users* and Indicator 1.3.3. Evidence and examples of cases where reform measures are listed in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 have contributed or have the potential to contribute to the achievement of the desired outputs of the reform defined in the revised TC: *The public administration fulfils its tasks more transparently and responsibly.*

The analysis of the fulfilment of the expected outputs and their contribution to achieving the intended outcomes of the reform shows that **limited results have been achieved in terms of a more accountable and transparent exercise of competences by public administration bodies, with better results in the area of transparency**.Despite certain analytical steps towards looking at the current situation and the capacity-building process that has been initiated, systemic solutions that would fundamentally improve accountability in the actions of public administration bodies have not yet been established and thus have not been brought to life in practice. There have been positive developments in the area of transparency (e.g. an improved legal framework in the area of access to information of public importance and the remit of the Ombudsman, and an increase in the number of bodies publishing data on the Open Data Portal). An important area for further improvement is the practice of administrative bodies responding to the actions of independent bodies, which still varies widely. The above findings were confirmed by the interviews conducted.

Regarding the sub-area of **accountability**, the European Commission's reports on the progress of the Republic of Serbia for the years 2020, 2021 and 2022 contain almost identical findings and suggest, among other things: that ”the lines of accountability between agencies and their parent institutions remain blurred, contributing to overlapping functions, fragmentation, and unclear reporting lines”; that “political commitment to managerial accountability, performance management and systematic delegation of responsibilities is still needed”; that “the establishment of a registry of holders of public powers was postponed”; that “institutions still have a predominantly bureaucratic and process-oriented approach to planning, budgeting and reporting on their activities”.[[130]](#footnote-131) The OECD/SIGMA report for Serbia of 2021 contains similar conclusions.[[131]](#footnote-132) Although the PAR Strategy for the period 2021-2030 envisaged the achievement of progress in 2022, the draft Annual Report for 2022 on the implementation of the PAR Strategy for the period 2021-2030 also states that the situation in this area has not changed, i.e. that there has been no progress in the area of accountability in the last three years.[[132]](#footnote-133) According to the respondents, managerial accountability is an area to be given special reform attention in the coming period in order to create and then implement appropriate solutions.

Despite the above findings, however, it is important to note that some measures have been taken in this area and that the implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 has achieved certain positive results. Certain steps *towards improving the delegation of responsibility as part of managerial responsibility* have been realised through the appointment of authorised officials to carry out administrative procedures and decide on administrative matters - out of 78 state administrative bodies, 61 authorities have appointed authorised persons, which corresponds to 78% of the total number of bodies.[[133]](#footnote-134) An exceptional increase was recorded in 2021, when a shift from 23% (2020 data) to 79.45% (2020 data) took place. On the other hand, due to the formation of new Government with new departments and state administration bodies, there was a slight decrease in 2022, when the mentioned 78% of state administrative bodies appointed authorised officials to conduct administrative procedures and decide on administrative matters. Nevertheless, the target values of the PAR Strategy for the period 2021-2030 were exceeded many times over.[[134]](#footnote-135) In order to *establish a mechanism for performance-based management*, i.e. to improve the vertical and horizontal system of control and monitoring of work in the public administration, the available documentation shows a significant increase in the percentage of priority objectives from the Action Plan for the implementation of the Government Programme that relate to the state administration bodies that were taken into account in the preparation of the medium-term plans of those responsible for medium-term planning - from 23.8% (in 2021) to 52.5% (in 2022).[[135]](#footnote-136) In other words, of the 99 results under the priority objectives set out in the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Government Programme for the period 2020-2022, which lost its validity with the formation of the new Government in 2022, 52 were included in the medium-term plans of the responsible institutions for the period 2022-2024, which significantly exceeded the target for the year in question (planned 30%, achieved 52.5%).[[136]](#footnote-137) Finally, the available data indicate that *investments are currently being made in strengthening the capacity of public administration staff, especially managers*, to improve the various areas of accountability at work. In this sense, it should be noted that the implementation of training for managers on the application of the principles of managerial accountability and training on the application of a unified methodology for performance management began in 2022, i.e. before the deadlines set by the PARS AP. That is particularly significant given the apparent stagnation in the creation of systemic solutions for the aforementioned aspects of a (see further details in the findings for indicator 1.2.1). However, the data suggests that these processes are in the early stages and that it will be necessary to wait some time before analysing the concrete effects.

*Table:* Conducting trainings of importance for the area of accountability, provided for PARS AP for the period 2021-2025[[137]](#footnote-138)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **TYPE OF TRAINING** | **Achieved results** | | |
| **2020** | **2021** | **2022** |
| Percentage of state administration bodies, independent state bodies, and LSGs whose managers attended training sessions on the application of the principles of managerial accountability in 2022 | 0% | 0% | 2.63% |
| Percentage of state administration bodies, independent state bodies, and LSGs whose representatives attended **training sessions on the application of the Methodology for managerial accountability** | 0% | 0% | 1.38% |
| Percentage of state administration bodies and independent state bodies that organise and deliver **training on ethics and integrity to their managers and employees** | 0% | 81.8% | 81.8% |

In terms of transparency, the European Commission Report on the progress of the Republic of Serbia in 2022 in the area of policy-making and co-ordination, among other things, states that “the level of public consultation has improved”. It indicates better transparency of the legislative process, but that there is “no central body in charge of quality control” and the reports on the consultations carried out “are not yet systematically published, nor are explanations systematically provided on the acceptance or rejection of comments received”. As regards public scrutiny of government work, it notes that “reports were published on the implementation of the PAR strategy and PFM reform programme and Action Plan for the Implementation of the Government Programme”, but that “the government’s website still does not provide direct access to monitoring reports on the implementation of key government planning documents”. It further states that “agendas, minutes and conclusions of government sessions are still not published”. In the part concerning public financial management, the European Commission notes that “Serbia did not progress in improving budget transparency.”[[138]](#footnote-139) On the other hand, given that the final outcome of the reforms aim at a more transparent administration at all levels, it is important to point out that the index of transparency of local self-governments is continuously increasing from year to year - from an average value of 40 index points (2019), to 46 (2020). then 48 (2021), to 49 (2022). However, based on the maximum possible score (100), it is clear that there is still considerable room for further progress in this segment of the work of local self-governments.[[139]](#footnote-140) Finally, according to Global Right to Information Rating, the Republic of Serbia ranks 3rd out of 135 countries in the area of the right of access to information held by public administration bodies, with a score of 135 out of a maximum of 150 (the same as in 2020 and 2021). However, the above results do not include an assessment based on the recent amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance.[[140]](#footnote-141)

Although the results so far include certain aspects of transparency in the work of public administration, it is important to remember that these are not fully addressed by the PARS AP. They are also included in other public policy documents that are part of the strategic framework of public administration reform (more specifically, programmes in the area of public policy management reform, public finance management reform and reform of the local self-government system), such as an action plan for Chapter 23. In this sense, the situation described cannot be fully associated with the implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025, nor can it be fully the subject of this analysis. However, it should certainly be taken into account in the next planning cycles.

As far as the results of the implementation of the PARS AP itself are concerned, the 2021 annual report *records progress in 2021, when a shift from 21 (result from 2020) to 21.5 index points* was achieved according to the OECD/SIGMA method. However, the target value of 22 points was still not achieved for the year in question.[[141]](#footnote-142) The measurement of this indicator by OECD/SIGMA is not planned for 2022, which makes it impossible to determine the trends more precisely. Among the outputs achieved, the constant growth in the number of public administration bodies and other public authorities sharing/publishing open data on the Open Data Portal stands out - from 45 (2019) to 83 (2021) to 95 (2022)[[142]](#footnote-143). This indicates the current trend of development of proactive transparency of the public administration. The number of data sets published on the Portal also shows remarkable progress - by the end of July 2023, 2,198 data sets were published on the Portal, which is five times more than at the end of 2020.[[143]](#footnote-144) A graph with numbers and a number

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The above trends are accompanied by capacity-building measures, so that *the percentage of state administrative bodies and local self-government units whose employees have participated in training on open data standards and work with the Open Data Portal is also increasing* - from 0% (2020) to 8.57% (2021) to 9.27% (2022) (see indicator 1.3.1). This can be seen in the European Commission's progress report of the Republic of Serbia for 2022, which states that “progress has been made on public access to institutional data thanks to the national open data portal”[[144]](#footnote-145). The same is stated in the 2021 OECD/SIGMA report for Serbia, which points out that “the level of proactive transparency of the government as a whole is good, with room for improvement at the level of individual institutions".[[145]](#footnote-146) The area of “open data” was recognised in the interviews as one of the areas that has great potential for further progress. Another result with great potential in the area of transparency is *the design and commissioning of the previously mentioned Unified Information System of work Information Booklets* (see indicator 1.3.1). They serve to consolidate in one place information on the work of 6,835 public administration bodies[[146]](#footnote-147). This information can be found to a much greater extent than before the legislative amendments in question. The full contribution of this information system to improving the level of transparency is yet to be expected.

Finally, available evidence highlights substantial room for enhancing *public administration actions in alignment with regulations governing the work of independent state bodies*, which was further corroborated by interviews. Although the regulatory framework in the area of access to information of public importance and the remit of the Ombudsman was improved in 2021, with the intention to promote greater accountability and transparency of public administration bodies towards citizens (see indicator 1.3.1), the relevant data show that the practice deviates significantly from the normative framework and the objectives set.

*Table: Percentage the compliance with the enactments of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection and the Ombudsman[[147]](#footnote-148)*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Compliance with the enactments**  **Commissioner/Ombudsman** | **Achieved outputs** | | |
| **2019** | **2021** | **2022** |
| Percent of the compliance with the enactments of **the Commissioner for information of public importance and personal data protection** | 65% | 75.09%  (targeted:  65%) | 72.94%  (targeted:  68%) |
| Percent of the compliance with the enactments of **the Ombudsman** | 81.43% | 77.52%  (targeted:  81.97%) | 63.57%  (targeted:  85%) |

When it comes *to the compliance with the decisions of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection*, although the target values provided for PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 were reached, the percentage drop in 2022 compared to the previous year is evident. In general, with regard to access to information of public importance, the number of formally reported complaints to the Commissioner due to the violation of the right to access information of public importance is consistently high and generally shows an upward trend from year to year,[[148]](#footnote-149) which indicates that it is impossible for those seeking information to obtain the information they need from the competent public administration bodies. However, the Commissioner's Report for 2022 states that “one of the main causes of the significant increase in the number of filed complaints in 2022 is the severe abuse of rights by five related complainants from Vranje, who filed 5,027 complaints[[149]](#footnote-150) in a very short period of time”, and the data for 2022 should be interpreted in that light. The mentioned problem with the abuse of rights was also confirmed through interviews. It is also characterised as a problem that should be urgently solved.

*Graph : Number of filed and resolved complaints by the Commissioner, per years (2010-2022)[[150]](#footnote-151)*

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The Commissioner's reports for 2021 and 2022 also state that a high percentage of the complaints submitted to this body were well founded (63.55% in 2021, 42.9% in 2022) and that the largest number of complaints were due to completely ignored requests from information seekers, the so-called “silence of administration” (38.8% in 2021, 52.2% in 2022).[[151]](#footnote-152) Finally, the Commissioner points to the multi-year trend “that the right of access to information is still difficult to exercise without the intervention of the Commissioner, which confirms the poor attitude and lack of sense of accountability of public authorities towards citizens, non-compliance with the law and irrational, i.e. unnecessary, use of staff and spending of public funds, as there was no real reason for the initial withholding of information before the complaint was lodged.”[[152]](#footnote-153) To all this, it should be added that *the percentage of enforcement of the proposed, i.e. ordered measures in the inspection control over the compliance with the rules on free access to information of public importance* in 2021 was extremely high - as much as 99% and represented significant progress compared to the 80% planned for 2021, i.e. 75% achieved in 2019.[[153]](#footnote-154) It is currently not possible to determine further trends, as the Administrative Inspection annual work plan for 2022 does not include control in this area and no data is available.

With regard to the actions taken by public administration bodies in line with *the recommendations of the Ombudsman*, a negative trend can be seen in the table above - not only were the target values envisaged by the PARS AP not achieved, but the percentage of recommendations implemented has fallen steadily over the last three years (2020-2022). The reports of the Ombudsman show that this body forwards most of the recommendations to the public administration (65% of the total in 2022 and 2021 and 45% of the total in 2020).[[154]](#footnote-155)

The need to ensure more efficient implementation of legal enactments of independent state bodies by the public administration bodies, in particular decisions of the Commissioner for Access to Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection, was recognised in the European Commission's latest annual report on the progress of the Republic of Serbia for 2022.[[155]](#footnote-156)

## Annex 6. Sectoral Analysis – Communication and Co-ordination

|  |
| --- |
| C1.4  Activities carried out as part of the implementation of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 promoted better co-ordination and communications. |
| Activities carried out through the implementation of the PARS AP have promoted the recognition of the public administration reform (*Administration tailored to all of us*), the standardisation of messages, communication on the outputs and rights of citizens and businesses (constant growth in the number of citizens who have heard and know about public administration reform (24% of respondents in 2020, 31% in 2022). As a result, the number of citizens who are satisfied with the results of the reform is also increasing (as they know how to exercise their rights more easily, save money and time, etc.). The officials surveyed and interviewed believe that work in this area should continue to be proactive and persistent so that citizens are better informed, understand the reform and know what the reform is trying to achieve.  The documentation shows that there is room for improvement in the area of internal communication within the public administration (3.8 out of a possible 5 points in 2022), which was also confirmed by the interviews.  Structures were set up to co-ordinate the implementation of the AP PARS and the communication of the PARS as well as platforms for data input (internal JIS), analysis and monitoring (<https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/>). Implementation reports are prepared, discussed and adopted, although the level of interest and involvement in these processes varies, which affects the final impact of monitoring. The results of the interviews indicate that co-ordination structures could be improved to achieve greater, meaningful interaction, joint activities and synergies. The frequency of meetings, further development of capacity and awareness of the importance of co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation and the integration of recommendations from reporting into the planning system also need improvement, which was confirmed by the interviews. |

**Finding 1** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.4.1: Evidence of fulfilment of the expected direct outputs as defined in the revised TC in the area of communication and co-ordination

To achieve **effective co-ordination and monitoring of the measures and activities planned by the PARS AP**, it was envisaged to increase the human and technical capacities for co-ordination and the area of monitoring and evaluation of the PARS, to establish co-ordination at administrative and political level, to carry out a *mid-term* review of the PAR Strategy and to establish a medium-term framework for PAR expenditure and to review this framework in the future.

As per the increase in the number of staff, the latest Rulebook on the internal organisation and systematisation of the MPALSG of 2023 provides for an increase in staff from 2023 until 2025, while the number of executive officials actually employed in the period 2021-2023 remains the same, except in the Department of Public Relations, which was created in 2020 and where there is a shift in the period observed. Trainings have been organised in the past years with a view of improving the ability to perform co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tasks, and communicate reforms.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Organisational unit in the MPALSG** | **Year** | **Estimated number of jobs/actual employees** | **Number of people trained for co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation** | **Number of people trained in communication and public relations** |
| Department for Public Administration and e-Government | 2020 | 10[[156]](#footnote-157)/8 | 4[[157]](#footnote-158) |  |
| 2021 | 11/10 | 6[[158]](#footnote-159) | 5 |
| 2022 | 11/9 | 5[[159]](#footnote-160) | 2 |
| 2023 | 12/8 | 3[[160]](#footnote-161) | 2 |
| Sector for EU Integration and International Cooperation | 2020 | 12/11 |  |  |
| 2021 | 13/11 | 10[[161]](#footnote-162) |  |
| 2022 | 13/11 | 7[[162]](#footnote-163) | 3[[163]](#footnote-164) |
| 2023 | 14/10 | 6[[164]](#footnote-165) | 3[[165]](#footnote-166) |
| Public Relations Department within the MPALSG | 2020 | 5/0 |  |  |
| 2021 | 6/0 |  |  |
| 2022 | 6/4 |  | 1[[166]](#footnote-167) |
| 2023 | 5/4 |  | 4[[167]](#footnote-168) |

A platform for monitoring and analysing data on the AP PAR Strategy was also set up in 2020: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/> was established, which has since been extended to all public policy documents under the PAR strategy (Public Finance Management Programme, Local Government System Reform Programme, Public Policy Management Improvement and Regulatory Reform Programme, E-Paper, E-Government Development Programme). The baseline in 2020 was one public policy document on the platform (PARS AP 2018-2020), four in 2021 and six in 2022 together with the AP PAR Strategy for the period 2021-2025.[[168]](#footnote-169) Since the adoption of the new programme for the development of e-Government in 2022, the data from the previous programme for the period 2020-2022 was stored and archived at the platform and a new programme for the period 2023-2025 was introduced. In addition to the possibility of comparing and analysing data, the platform displays in real time all the data entered by different bodies in the internal Unified Information System for Planning, Implementation Monitoring, Public Policy Co-ordination and Reporting - UIS. The Republican Secretariat for Public Policies - PPS - is responsible for the UIS, as the competent body for public policy co-ordination. In other words, the data entered in real time is presented transparently, which increases the visibility of the measures implemented. The platform also provides scrutiny into non-entered data (it is visible which bodies do not enter current data), which is important as initial information for further co-ordination of monitoring and enforcement. (*Indicator 1.4.2. Citizens are better informed about the PAR, the planning and implementation of the PAR is more efficient and inclusive)*

Co-ordination at administrative and political levels has been established (indicator 1.1.4 and part of indicator 1.1.5): there is an organisational unit in the MPALSG (PAR Management Group - operational level of co-ordination) and an employee who deals with co-ordination work and is also the secretary of the Interministerial Project Group (administrative level of co-ordination) and the PAR Council (political level of co-ordination).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Levels of PAR co-ordination | Political level of co-ordination - | Administrative level of co-ordination - | Operational level of co-ordination - |
|  | Working groups and organisational units | **PAR COUNCIL** | **INTERMINISTERIAL PROJECT GROUP - IMPG** | **MPALSG: PAR management group** |
| Number of meetings in one calendar year | 2021 | 2[[169]](#footnote-170) | 1[[170]](#footnote-171) |  |
| 2022 | 0[[171]](#footnote-172) | 3[[172]](#footnote-173) |  |
| 2023 | 1[[173]](#footnote-174) | 1[[174]](#footnote-175) |  |
| The number of meetings is measured using SIGMA Methodological Framework for[[175]](#footnote-176) the Principles of Public Administration |  | At least two times a year | At least four times a year |  |

Following the adoption of the PAR Strategy in April 2021, the Council for Public Administration Reform was established in June 2021 - the PAR Council[[176]](#footnote-177). It is chaired by the Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, vice-chaired by the Minister of Finance and whose members include, in addition to the relevant ministers, the directors of the special government services and the civil service as well as the Provincial Secretary for Regional Development, Interregional Cooperation and Local Self-Government of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, and the Secretary General of the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, as a specific association that is a link to local self-government (considering that it is part of the strategy of the PAR, i.e. the Programme for the Reform of the System of Local Self-Government). The Council has 21 members and is the only political co-ordination level for the PAR strategy and all accompanying programmes.

In September 2021, the administrative co-ordination level was formed - the Interministerial Project Group (IMPG).[[177]](#footnote-178) It has 43 members, including representatives of state administration bodies, representatives of citizens' associations[[178]](#footnote-179) and independent state bodies.[[179]](#footnote-180) The members of the IMPG are the contact points for the co-ordination of data collection during reporting. However, they are also the co-ordinators for various thematic areas of the PAR Strategy, including the three lower hierarchical programmes (Public Financial Management Programme, Local Self-Government System Reform Programme, Public Policy Management Improvement and Regulatory Reform Programme). The programmes have retained their operational teams in practice, but the co-ordinators are required to report to the IMPG meetings and point out common challenges.

Both working groups, the PAR Council, as an advisory body to the Government, and the IMPG, have rules of procedure, and all meeting minutes are published on the platform <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture.html>.

After reviewing the agendas and minutes of the meetings, the working groups deal with reports on the implementation of the programmes‘ action plans, the results of the SIGMA report in the area of PAR, proposals for new policy and strategic documents in the area of PAR, proposals and challenges in the area of planning EU-SBS funds for PAR. At the thematic meetings, strategic human resources management was discussed, the findings of the WeBER national PAR group of citizens' associations[[180]](#footnote-181) were presented, and individual activities and indicators were reported on and discussed.

In other words, the co-ordination structure has been established, platforms for data entry (internal UIS), analysis and monitoring (<https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/>) have been established, data is collected and entered, and implementation reports are published regularly, once a year.

The mid-term review of the PARS AP, initiated as planned in 2023, is currently underway as a combined evaluation aimed at enhancing monitoring and evaluation (Indicator 1.1.5). The evaluation reference group is the IMPG, ensuring the participation of all its members, including both public authorities and civil society organisations. *(Indicator 1.4.2. More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of the PAR)*

The Law on the Planning System[[181]](#footnote-182) and the Decree on the Methodology for the Preparation of Medium-Term Plans mandate the creation of medium-term plans by institutions, along with their corresponding medium-term expenditure framework.[[182]](#footnote-183) As an illustration, MPALSG consistently releases medium-term plans accompanied by expenditure frameworks on website https://mduls.gov.rs/javnost-u-radu/budzet-ministarstva/ (in 2023, it fulfilled the legal obligation by publishing the fourth consecutive plan). Conversely, there is no national legal obligation to prepare medium-term expenditure frameworks for the sector, as defined in the context of European integration, covering public administration reform and public finance. In order to be able to report within the framework of EU funding, medium-term expenditure frameworks are also drawn up for the aforementioned sector, so that in April 2022, the Public Administration Reform Sector Medium Term Expenditure Framework - PAR MTEF - was prepared, and the finalisation of the Public Administration Medium Term Expenditure Framework for the period 2023-2025 is underway.

To ensure **efficient co-ordination of donor support in the** **area of PAR**, the plan included several initiatives: adopting a Roadmap for executing the Sector Reform Contract, managing and monitoring it via “policy dialogue”, and other co-ordination platforms. Additionally, developing a risk management system for PAR, enhancing human resource capacity within the Sector for European Integration and International Cooperation to oversee the implementation of the sector budget support instrument and the PAR Sector Reform Contract, and bolstering capacity for donor co-ordination and project management were outlined objectives.

Nevertheless, as per the annual reports on the implementation of the PARS AP,[[183]](#footnote-184) the roadmap has not been prepared, and the risk management system has not been put into effect. In terms of capacity, the Rulebook on internal organisational of MPALSG for 2023 anticipates a raise in employee numbers in the subsequent period. However, the count of actual staff employed between 2021 and 2023 is one less than the initial count. In recent years, staff trainings focused on enhancing soft skills to bolster donor co-ordination and communication of PAR outputs, have been organised. Additionally, according to the Law on Ministries (“Official Gazette of the RS" no. 128/20, 116/22) “co-ordination of international bilateral and multilateral donor assistance to the Republic of Serbia” is the responsibility of the Ministry for European Integration - MEI, and not of the individual ministries for individual topics. So, the effective co-ordination of donor assistance in each area, including the PAR area, is managed jointly with the MEI.

**A co-ordination mechanism for the planning, implementation and monitoring of the PAR communication at the national level is in operation.** Direct outputs achieved are the following: capacities in both human resources and technical aspects for PAR communication were strengthened; annual operational strategies for PAR communication were established, alongside quarterly and annual reports evaluating their implementation; findings from annual opinion surveys, reflecting public perceptions of the PAR process and outputs are now available.

The co-ordination mechanism for the PAR communication area was set up in the previous period, and the working group was established on 1 February 2022.[[184]](#footnote-185) However, considering the fact that of the 23 members and 23 deputy members, 4 members and 3 deputies were from organisational units in charge of public relations and the other members and deputy members were from organisational units not dealing with communication and public relations, a new decision was taken in 2023[[185]](#footnote-186), which increases the number of members from organizational units that deal with communication and public relations to a minimum of 17 out of 50 members (although it is not clearly stated for each member to which organisational unit or workplace they belong). It is significant that the promoters of the reforms in the areas of public administration reform planning, public policy, European integration, public finance, professional development and training, internal affairs, justice, information and telecommunications, information technologies and e-Government have appointed their members in the working group from organisational units in charge of public relations in order to have an institutional communication channel on the subject of public relations in the PAR area.

All bodies that have representatives on the PAR Council were invited to join the working group. Representatives from the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities were also appointed. *(Indicator 1.4.2. More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of the PAR).* The working group held four meetings until June 2023.[[186]](#footnote-187) In those meetings it discussed the annual reports on the implementation of the annual operational plans for PAR-related communication and the preparation and co-ordination of the new operational plan for PAR-related communication for 2023. At the May 2023 meeting, it was agreed that, with the aim of improving the visibility of results, closer cooperation and strengthening the “PR network” in the field of public administration reform, the operational communication plan should include at least one joint promotional activity each year. This activity would involve all member bodies of the working group (e.g. as part of the annual operational plan for communication of the Public Administration Reform for 2023, the joint activity is: Promotion of the concept of e-citizen, enabling the use of various electronic services of different public authorities).[[187]](#footnote-188) This activity was carried out to some extend in a co-ordinated manner in July 2023.[[188]](#footnote-189) (*Indicator 1.4.2. Citizens are better informed about the PAR, the planning and implementation of the PAR is more efficient and inclusive).*

The department for public relations of the MPALSG at the operational level of co-ordination has 5 planned posts, four of which are to be filled in 2023. Two employees have completed training in the field of digital communication in the past period. The department has been supported from the outset by the complementary EU funding project in the area of visibility and communication <https://par-visibility.euzatebe.rs/en/about-project>. Together, the MPALSG, the Working Group for Planning and Co-ordination of Public Administration Communication and the aforementioned Complementary Support Project have developed and adopted annual operational plans for 2021, 2022 and 2023, for better PAR communication. The overarching operational plan is part of the PARS for the period 2021-2030 (see Annex 3 of the PARS., as well as part of the PARS AP for the area of co-ordination and communication). For the first time, the PAR Strategy included a specific section for communicating the process and results of the PAR, presenting an analysis of the situation in this area and a proposal for measures and activities to be implemented. The annual operational plan for PAR communication stands as the secondary level within the planning document. activities pertaining to communicating the processes and outputs of the PAR receive further anne ual elaboration and detailing. The strategic document that preceded all subsequent analyses and plans is the Strategic Communication Framework for PAR[[189]](#footnote-190) of September 2019. It initially mapped the capacity for communication and public relations of the bodies in the PAR area (e.g. it was then mapped that there was no organisational unit in the MPALSG dealing with these tasks, independent of the offices and ministers, so that the Rulebook of 2020 provides for such a unit). The operational plans for the years 2021, 2022 and 2023 have not been publicly issued. However, they have been adopted by MPALSG (operational plan for 2021) and by the working group (for 2022 and 2023).[[190]](#footnote-191) The operational plan for 2023 is much broader than the previous operational plan, as bodies are asked to recognise various activities that are carried out as part of the public administration reform efforts but do not formally fall under the public administration strategy. So, the activities that are mapped and included do not fall under the overarching PAR Strategy but concern the promotion of e-Services or physical administrative services that were not covered in 2021 (*Indicator 1.4.2. More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of the PAR).*

Annual reports on the implementation of communication activities and the visibility of operational plans were prepared for 2021 and 2022. Both were discussed in the working group meetings. Quarterly reports were not prepared, as regular monthly meetings were held as part of the complementary support project, during which the activities carried out and the planned modalities for the implementation of the planned future activities were also discussed. A summary of all the above reports was prepared and published as part of the annual reports on the PARS implementation for 2021, 2022 and 2023.[[191]](#footnote-192)

Annual opinion surveys on public awareness of the PAR process and its outputs were conducted regularly in 2020, 2021 and 2022.[[192]](#footnote-193) The annual surveys have data on the sources of information (television, social networks, etc.), so they have been used not only for insight into the impact of the work in this area, but also for further planning of communication of messages in the area of the PAR.

To foster the **Harmonisation, standardisation, and ongoing PAR communication within public administration,** the intended direct outputs were: enhanced capabilities of PR officers and HRM organisational units in SABs and LSGUs regarding the essence, methodology, channels, and tools for interdepartmental and internal PAR communication; augmented technical capabilities through the establishment and operation of an bulletin board as an internal communication tool; availability of findings from an annual survey among public servants concerning information about the PAR process and outputs.

While the trainings were initially intended for in-person participation, in 2020, given the COVID period, the emphasis shifted towards adapting and transitioning these activities to an online format. In this way, the scope and reach of potential users was expanded and the possibility of training was extended, as users could access the online training courses at any time and from any location. In 2022, 5 online training courses were hosted on the website of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) on the following topic: “Successful Communication”[[193]](#footnote-194), which were developed as part of the EU project. These training courses had a total of 1270 participants in 2022, although the target value was 400 participants.[[194]](#footnote-195) By August 2023, the number of participants who had completed the training had risen to 1,851. The structure of participants by module is as follows *Public administration - Efficient service to citizens and the economy* - 216 in total: public relations staff 4, HRM staff 7, others: 205; Public Speaking: 705 in total namely: public relations staff 5, HRM staff 19, others: 681, *Communication in social networks:* 325 in total namely: public relations staff 4, HRM staff 9, others: 312, *Communicator:*  311 in total namely: public relations staff 5, HRM staff 11, others: 295, *Crisis communication:* 294 in total namely: public relations staff 5, HRM staff 9, others: 280.[[195]](#footnote-196)

Technically speaking, a bulletin board was set up for internal communication within the public administration and functioned in a test environment in 2020.[[196]](#footnote-197) The following information can already be found in the following report: “*due to the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, the Republic of Serbia had to reallocate the 2021 budget and focus funds on the most necessary expenditures specifically related to public health and crisis management. As a result, the funds for the “Bulletin board” planned for 2021 were postponed to 2023. Research shows that civil servants are mainly informed about PAR through the media outlets, which indicates that there is still considerable room for improvement in the area of internal communication in the coming period.”[[197]](#footnote-198)* As of 2022, the monitoring platform notes that the aforementioned activity, which has the goal of standardising and continuously communicating important topics in the area of PAR*.*[[198]](#footnote-199) The activities for the International Public Service Day on 23 June have also been discontinued (organisation of a competition for the best public servant, rewarding LSGs for results achieved, etc*.*)[[199]](#footnote-200).

While annual opinion polls examined public awareness and the extent of PAR outputs in external communication, research on internal communication within the public administration was conducted each year through focus groups.[[200]](#footnote-201) There are reform activities that, if not communicated within the administration, do not lead to the desired results (e.g. in 2021, the number of electronic seals issued, which include a G2G service (Government to Government Service did not even reach the planned target value (3000 were planned and 60 were issued), although the technical solution was simply integrated through an application on the e-Government portal: [https://euprava.gov.rs/%C5%BEivotna-oblast/76](https://euprava.gov.rs/životna-oblast/76) , and all changes to the legal framework were made beforehand.[[201]](#footnote-202) The annual report on the implementation of the PAR strategy for 2021[[202]](#footnote-203) states that the causes lie in the insufficient information of institutions about the existence of a software solution for the electronic submission of applications for obtaining consent to the content and appearance of e-seals on the e-Government Portal and in the lack of promotion of the procedure for obtaining and using e-seals. A similar situation was repeated in the Report for the 2022 e-Government Development Programme for the e-Office implementation activity, where it states: “Although the e-office has been put into operation https://pisarnica.gov.rs/ , it is not sufficiently used (only by MPALSG and ITE in 2022)“.[[203]](#footnote-204) *(Indicator 1.4.2. More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of the PAR).*

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| **Internal communication** | **Average rating of information about the PAR among civil servants (on a scale from 1 to 5)** | **Average score for internal communication in the public administration (on a scale of 1 to 5)** |
| Focus group research in 2020 | 3.6[[204]](#footnote-205) | 3.6[[205]](#footnote-206) |
| Focus group research in 2021 | 3.46[[206]](#footnote-207) | 3.7[[207]](#footnote-208) |
| Focus group research in 2022 | 3.55[[208]](#footnote-209) | 3.8[[209]](#footnote-210) |

The average rates fluctuate slightly, and research shows from year to year that *civil servants only follow and know what is happening in the institutions where they are employed because of their work. Moreover, civil servants show a higher level of knowledge and awareness of both the reform itself and its promoters than the employees of the local administration units. Apart from admitting that they are not sufficiently informed about the reform that goes beyond their area of work, they say that they learn about other reforms mainly through the means of mass communication, i.e. television, and when they need to use public administration services, they consult their colleagues or search the Internet for additional information.[[210]](#footnote-211)*

*Internal communication is most frequently carried out through official channels (e-mail and post), while e-mail and verbal communication by telephone are used as communication channels for internal communication about the reform. A certain regularity was also observed that horizontal communication is more likely to take place by telephone than vertical communication by e-mail. Civil servants attribute the problems with internal communication primarily to the human factor, but also to the avoidance of taking responsibility and the lack of an institutional memory system.[[211]](#footnote-212)*

A good example of internal communication are networks such as the HR Network,[[212]](#footnote-213) which was established to speed up the exchange of ideas and solve practical problems, to improve co-ordination between the HR units and the HRMS, the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), the MPALSG and the General Secretariat (for senior civil servants).

To **enhance the PAR visibility and communication process** **and its results**, a map illustrating SABs’ and LSGs' capacities for PAR communication is now available and standards governing PAR communication have been officially adopted. Guidelines for establishing and managing profiles on social media platforms by SABs and LSGs have been adopted and put into practice; capacities of HR leaders, PR, and media staff to effectively communicate and report on the PAR and its outputs have been augmented; awareness among citizens and businesses regarding their rights and the PAR outputs has been raised.

As part of the PAR Strategic Communication Framework[[213]](#footnote-214) a mapping of capacities was undertaken and published, first mapping the capacities for communication and public relations of the bodies in the PAR area (e.g. it was then mapped that there is no organisational unit in the MPALSG in charge of these matters, independent of offices and ministers, so that such a unit is foreseen in the Rulebook from 2020. At the local level, it was noted that only a small number of staff have public relations in their job description, and it was noted that there is a network of communicators, i.e. PR managers at the local level, led by the SCTM). No additional mapping was carried out in 2021, but the findings from the Strategic Communication Framework were the basis for planning capacity improvement activities as part of the communication plan in the PAR Strategy and subsequent operational plans.

The standards for communication were adopted under the name “Guidelines for Communicating PAR”.[[214]](#footnote-215) The document contains a set of rules to communicating PAR, relating to: Guide for the use of graphic elements of visual identity “administration tailored to all of us”, communication guidelines to promote the process and outputs of public administration reform.

Guidelines for the use of social networks for public administrations and institutions[[215]](#footnote-216) have also been drawn up with the aim of providing civil servants responsible for the management of institutional accounts on social networks with the latest knowledge on the management of accounts and the creation of content published on them. The document is publicly available, but was first distributed to the PAR SABs and LSGs' communication representatives at the meetings on 12 and 15 October 2021.[[216]](#footnote-217)

The reports refer to the implementation of online training courses from 2022 (“Successful Communication”, on the NAPA platform) as well as individual and group coaching for SABs, PR managers to increase capacity in this area and report on the results achieved.[[217]](#footnote-218) Capacities are increased not only through training, but also, for example, through a competition for the best managed profiles on social networks (focusing on two-way communication with citizens), in which the Municipality of Mali Zvornik won the prize for the best user-oriented and managed profile on social networks in 2022.  
 The activity was carried out in several phases. First, in collaboration with SCTM, a training session was organised for LSGU public relations representatives on the operation of social networks. Subsequently, activities were carried out with the support of the EU project “Supporting the visibility and communication of RUs under the Sectoral Reform Agreement for PAR”.[[218]](#footnote-219) One possibility is to promote examples of good practice such as the conference on open data and the values of the Open Government Partnership - OGP. [[219]](#footnote-220) In terms of increasing media capacity, 4 online briefings and 1 live training session were organised in 2021, 2 online media briefings and 5 training sessions for local and national media representatives were organised in 2022 and 1 media briefing in 2023.[[220]](#footnote-221)

To raise awareness among citizens and businesses of their rights and of the outputs of the PAR, in 2022: "The media campaign “PAR is...” was continuously implemented, achieving co-operation with 13 national and 22 local and regional media outlets. Almost 100 features were placed on national, local and regional TV and radio stations, 145 texts in print media, more than 80 agency texts and over 1,000 adverts on internet portals. In particular, three TV spots (advertisements) were recorded presenting the essence of the reform process was:

* Don't miss a single sheet of paper (promotion of the Central Register of citizens:  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-dClMM6H9I&t=4s](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-dClMM6H9I&t=4s&data=05|01|ljiljana.uzelac@mduls.gov.rs|489aaa7f946043d8316f08db941b059e|e9869d9e5f16415689b0d51630ff7000|1|0|638266616023375010|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0=|3000|||&sdata=ELs8RpaSIR17PFPW4fsYMnjdI17Qi++A3slxgToqX+M=&reserved=0) )
* E-services of public administration (promotion of e-Citizen: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7c\_ebzhc8Zg&t=1s](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7c_ebzhc8Zg&t=1s&data=05|01|ljiljana.uzelac@mduls.gov.rs|489aaa7f946043d8316f08db941b059e|e9869d9e5f16415689b0d51630ff7000|1|0|638266616023531225|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0=|3000|||&sdata=qQGbbZd246RnBlhIT1+DoHm/4pIRQ6o5JnJMShh8zI0=&reserved=0) )
* One-stop-shop ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1Hr0v8aKJY&t=7s](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1Hr0v8aKJY&t=7s&data=05|01|ljiljana.uzelac@mduls.gov.rs|489aaa7f946043d8316f08db941b059e|e9869d9e5f16415689b0d51630ff7000|1|0|638266616023531225|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0=|3000|||&sdata=LkOElUrIIuhNWYtQ87nXjvdqpm6bMmgge7Us8mCRzGI=&reserved=0) ).“[[221]](#footnote-222)

The "PAR is...” [[222]](#footnote-223) campaign has been running continuously since May 2020 and so far there have been over 300 announcements in national media outlets and over 600 announcements in local media produced and marketed by MPALSG and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR under the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”. The campaign is a continuation of the advertising campaign “Administration tailored to all of us", which was carried out at the end of 2019 (e.g. the campaign “PAR is...” uses the slogan and logo “Administration tailored to all of us”.[[223]](#footnote-224)

The effectiveness of external communication (**Indicator 1.4.2. Citizens are better informed about PAR**) is monitored by annual opinion polls, which show the continuous increase in number of citizens who have heard and are or aware the public administration reform (24% or a quarter of respondents in 2020 and 31% in 2022). As a result, the number of citizens who are satisfied with the results of the reform is also increasing (as they know how to exercise their rights more easily, save money and time, etc...).

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| **EFFECTIVE EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS** | Citizens are better informed about PAR -  % of citizens who have heard of PAR and know what PAR is | Average rating given by citizens to the overall work of the public administration (from 1 to 5) | % of respondents who are (fairly or completely) satisfied with the effects of public administration, as reflected in satisfaction with time saved in performing tasks, money saved in performing tasks and improved quality of services |
| 2020[[224]](#footnote-225) | 24% | 3.31 | 39% satisfied when it comes to saving money,  51% satisfied when it comes to the improved quality of services and  55% satisfied when it comes to saving time in completing tasks related to public administration. |
| 2021[[225]](#footnote-226) | 29% | 3.7 | 63% money saving  54% higher quality of service  68% time saving |
| 2022[[226]](#footnote-227) | 31% | 3.7 | 68% money saving  55% higher quality of service  70% time saving |

**Finding 2** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.4.2 *The co-ordination and communication mechanism of the PAR was established* - in addition to the evidence mentioned in Finding 1.

The co-ordination mechanism for the RU <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture.html> and the co-ordination mechanism for the PAR communication were established during the observed period, including representatives of government bodies and civil society organisations (*Indicator 1.4.2. More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of the PAR).* At the operational level, MPALSG has organisational units that deal with the process co-ordination (Department of Public Administration and e-Government and Department of Public Relations). The co-ordination of project support in the area of state administration and local self-administration is handled by the Department for EU Integration and International Cooperation. The co-ordination structures meet regularly and the composition and scope of work are in line with the recommendations of the SIGMA Handbook for the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of public administration reform and sectoral strategies.[[227]](#footnote-228)

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|  | Levels of co-ordination | PAR Political level of co-ordination | PAR Administrative level of co-ordination | PAR Administrative level of communication co-ordination |
|  | **PAR COUNCIL[[228]](#footnote-229)** | **INTERMINISTERIAL PROJECT GROUP - IMP[[229]](#footnote-230)** | **SPECIAL WORKING GROUP FOR THE PLANNING AND CO-ORDINATION OF PAR COMMUNICATION[[230]](#footnote-231)** |
| Number of meetings in one calendar year | 2021 | 2[[231]](#footnote-232) | 1[[232]](#footnote-233) | / |
| 2022 | 0[[233]](#footnote-234) | 3[[234]](#footnote-235) | 1[[235]](#footnote-236) |
| 2023 | 1[[236]](#footnote-237) | 1[[237]](#footnote-238) | 3[[238]](#footnote-239) |

The European Commission 2022 Serbia Progress Report 2022, states: *“The authorities have involved civil society organisations in monitoring this Strategy in the first year of its implementation. The PAR Council, chaired by the minister responsible for public administration, held two meetings in 2021. Political support for public administration continued.*”[[239]](#footnote-240) (*Indicator 1.4.2*. *More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of the PAR).*

The SIGMA Monitoring report for Serbia from 2021, in the Conclusions for the area of co-ordination of the public administration reform and public finance sector, concludes that: “*The PAR Council, as the highest political level of co-ordination, has been established and is functioning*. *However, the structures of the administrative level of co-ordination are not yet finalised and do not function regularly.”*[[240]](#footnote-241) SIGMA assesses the overall co-ordination framework, including the Public Financial Management Programme and the Public Policy Management Improvement Programme and Regulatory Reform Programme. It concludes that the co-ordination framework for the PARS AP is operational. However, operational working bodies have been set up for programmes, as hierarchically lower-ranking public policy documents, yet they do not convene. An assessment of the work of the programmes mentioned is not within the scope of this evaluation. Certainly, the frequency of meetings of all working groups does not reach the standard that SIGMA prescribes. So, there is room for improvement in the coming period.

**Finding 3** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.4.3 *More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of the PAR* - in addition to the evidence mentioned in Finding 1 and Finding 2.

The PAR Strategy for the period 2021-2030 was prepared with the participation of state authorities, civil society organisations, the donor community, representatives of the EU Delegation to Serbia and the OECD/SIGMA, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, etc. (Annex 4. of the PAR Strategy on the Strategy preparation process and description of the consultation process).[[241]](#footnote-242) The inclusiveness and openness of the working groups to additional participants already existed during the first evaluation, continued during the preparation of the PAR strategy and all co-ordination and monitoring structures of the PAR Strategy implementation were formed in the same way. During the monitoring, one of the examples of inclusiveness is the process of preparing a narrative annual report on the implementation of the PAR Strategy for 2021. On that occasion, at the IMPG meeting held on 25 May 2022,[[242]](#footnote-243) a discussion on the results of the draft report was held with permanent members of the IMPG, SIGMA representatives and representatives of the WeBER National Working Group for Serbia, a group of civic associations, and after the discussion, the perception of civil society organisations regarding the outputs achieved and areas for improvement was included in the final report.[[243]](#footnote-244)

**An example of good practice**

**Communicating professional development activities “Promoting the Student Professional Internship Fair in Public Administration”, regional recognition, regional spill over effect and the opportunity for regional learning**

The implementation of the PAR Strategy for the period 2021-2030 had to adapt to the conditions of the Covid environment, and one of the most successful examples of the implementation of the planned activity, combined with capacity and donor support for communication, is the Promotion of the Student Professional Internship Fair in Public Administration. The fair was fully adapted to the online environment, a visual solution was designed and implemented that fully communicates with the target group of young people (3D platforms specially created for this purpose made it possible to hold the Fair in conditions that mimic the traditional fair environment.). Moreover, the reach was extended by the possibility of online access to the institutions, regardless of where the students are physically located.

The first Student Professional Internship Fair in Public Administration 2021/2022 (<https://sajam2021.mduls.gov.rs/>) was organised on 4 and 5 November 2021 as a hybrid online event with the aim of establishing better cooperation between public administration and higher education institutions in Serbia. It served to promote public administration as an attractive employer. The event, organised by the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government with the support of the EU project “Visibility and Communication of Public Administration Reform”, was attended by 18 public administration bodies at national and local level, with an offer of almost 400 places for professional practice and 5 state universities. The event was realised through an online platform created especially for this occasion in the form of the Palace of Serbia. During the two days of the fair, 2 panel discussions and 18 institution presentations were attended by more than 2,200 students in their final years of study, and the virtual stands of the institution were visited by more than 1100 visitors. In the month following the fair, around 1,800 more visitors visited the platform.

The second Fair of Student Professional Internship in Public Administration <https://sajamstrucneprakse2022.collectivibe.com/> was organised on 9 November 2022. The event was attended by public administration bodies at national and local level and state universities. It was organised via an online platform created especially for this occasion in the form of a virtual house of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. Prior to this, a new website of the virtual community of student internship in public administration was launched at the address <https://strucnapraksa.mduls.gov.rs/>. This website is a central source of information for all stakeholders (students, public administration bodies and universities) in the organisation and implementation of student internship in public administration.

The main results of the Fair: 56 public administration bodies and 5 state universities participated, 794 places for student internship were offered, 183 online presentations by public administration bodies with 80 presenters, 2 panel discussions with 37 participants, 23,000 visitors to the student internship website and 75,000 views of the website, 17,000 views of the fair platform. Following the Student Internship Fair in Public Administration, an online campaign was run on MPALSG social media profiles in December 2022 and January 2023 to promote the Student Internship Application Competition.

As part of the regional competition for awards in the field of public administration, the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA), in cooperation with OECD/SIGMA, awarded a Special prize for the Empowerment and Employment of Youth and for the Retention of Young Talents in the Institutions in 2022 to the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government for the above-mentioned activities, while Human Resources Management Service was awarded for the Candidates' Corner project <https://www.respaweb.eu/118/pages/69/winners-2022> . In the meantime, for the purpose of regional exchange of practices and the possibility of organising similar activities in the countries of the region, the presentation of the Student Internship Fair in Public Administration was held (<https://www.respaweb.eu/0/news/582/students-internship-programme-in-the-public-administration-of-serbia-could-be-an-impulse-for-other-similar-actions-in-respa-members-to-make-public-administration-an-attractive-employer-for-talented-youth>).

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| C1.5 The reform of public administration has contributed to increasing the professionalism of public administration and the quality of services in accordance with the European Principles of Public Administration. |
| In 2022, the Republic of Serbia achieved significant results (74% implemented and 26% not implemented) at the level of outcomes foreseen in the PAR Strategy, i.e. 82% of implemented measures (18% not implemented) in 2021. The impact of these measures is visible through the creation of a relevant strategic and legal framework and through the direct readability of their success in the increased level of citizen satisfaction. In addition, impact is reflected in the visible progress of the Republic of Serbia at the global level, where, according to World Bank standards, the effectiveness (efficiency) of public administration in 2022 was 57.08, which is an improvement compared to 2020 (51.43). Citizens' perceptions remain consistent, particularly concerning administrative services, especially electronic services, streamlined administrative procedures, and the introduction of clearer administrative processes, all contributing to a more citizen-centric public administration overall. |

**Finding 1** – Analysis based on Indicator 1.5.1The public administration reform has contributed to the creation of a more professional public administration through various measures, ensuring a better quality of service for citizens and businesses in line with the European principles of public administration.

In 2022, the Republic of Serbia achieved significant results (74% implemented and 26% not implemented) at the level of outcomes foreseen in the PARS,[[244]](#footnote-245) i.e. 82% of implemented measures (18% not implemented) in 2021.[[245]](#footnote-246) The impact of these measures is visible through the creation of a relevant strategic and legal framework and through the direct readability of their success in the increased level of citizen satisfaction. In addition impact is reflected in the visible progress of the Republic of Serbia at the global level, where, according to World Bank standards, the effectiveness (efficiency) of public administration in 2022 was 57.08, which is an improvement compared to 2020 (51.43) (the ranking value ranges from 0 to 100, with a higher value being better, and includes the perceptions of various sources regarding the quality of public services and public administration, as well as the degree of independence from political pressure, the quality of planning and implementation of measures and the credibility of the government in its commitment to these measures).[[246]](#footnote-247)Citizens' perceptions remain consistent, particularly concerning administrative services, especially electronic services (see the analysis in the domain of service provision), streamlined administrative procedures, and the introduction of clearer administrative processes, all contributing to a more citizen-centric public administration overall. Regarding overall satisfaction among citizens and businesses with the services provided, data from 2022 indicates a steady growing trend, maintaining the satisfaction level at 4 (out of a maximum score of 5) of 2020. [[247]](#footnote-248) According to the latest measurement of the application of the European Principles of Public Administration, SIGMA notes in the area of services that “Serbia continues to make good progress in modernising public services and improving their focus on users and has become one of the regional leaders in this area.” It also shows improved user satisfaction for both citizens and businesses. Serious efforts have been invested to simplify administrative procedures.”[[248]](#footnote-249)

The efforts made in the field of professionalisation and the transition to a modern system of human resources management play an important role in achieving the above-mentioned outputs, which have been achieved in the direction of building a user-oriented administration. An important basis for the implementation of the reforms was the change in the strategic approach in this area by the PARS, which for the first time united all aspects of the HRM in one planning document, thus optimising the strategic framework in this area.[[249]](#footnote-250) Such an approach enabled systematic planning and consideration of all key aspects of the HRM when setting targets, resulting in a high percentage of realisation of results - for 9 out of 12 results at the measure level. The target values planned by the PARS for 2022 were achieved.[[250]](#footnote-251) The work to introduce a performance-based employment system based on the competency framework introduced was recognised as important progress in the last SIGMA report.[[251]](#footnote-252) Together with continuous activities to strengthen the capacities of human resources units, the creation of an innovative professional development system contributed to improving the working environment of civil servants. At the same time, the constant growth in the number of available trainings conducted within the NAPA, followed by the increase in the number of trained civil servants at all levels, demonstrates the current investment in the development of professional and competent personnel. For the professionalisation of public administration, efforts to unify the civil servant system at all levels are particularly important, as evidenced by the gradual introduction of all newspapers at the local level, as it is the first address for citizens' needs and thus the place where the quality of the services provided is most visible.

## Annex 7. Intervention Logics

**Human resource management - Intervention Logic**

Analysing the situation and developing recommendations and guidelines for improving the recruitment of official working in acting capacity- analytical activity

Amendment of the normative framework regulating the procedure, powers and responsibilities for the appointment of acting officials - regulatory activity

Analysis and generation of data in connection with the organisation of personnel planning

Promotion and popularisation of the state administration as a desirable employer

Implementation of training and capacity building related to staff planning

Strengthening the strategic and methodological approach to improve human resources planning

Analysis of the situation and development of recommendations for the organisation of competition procedures and employment in state administrative bodies

Develop an induction programme to work in the public service for interns, probationers and those entering employment in the public administration who are not on probation

Conduct training and capacity building for members of the Competition Committee and HR departments on the application of modern selection methods

Strengthen the strategic and methodological approach and tools to improve the competency framework and the competency assessment tool

Strengthening the institutions of the centre of government in the area of acting officials HRM, their cooperation and improvement of training programmes for persons in positions, as well as the High Council of Civil Servants

IMPROVED STAFF PLANNING PROCESS IN THE STATE ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

AWARENESS OF THE STATE ADMINISTRATION AS A DESIRABLE EMPLOYER HAS BEEN RAISED

IMPROVED SELECTION AND INDUCTION PROCESS OF NEW EMPLOYEES

**BETTER QUALITY AND MORE EFFICIENT WORK OF EMPLOYEES IN THE STATE ADMINISTRATION**

**STATE ADMINISTRATION AND LSGs ATTRACT, HIRE AND RETAIN COMPETENT, EFFICIENT AND MOTIVATED STAFF**

**HIGHER QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

IMPROVED FRAMEWORK FOR COMPETENCES

IMPROVED MERIT-BASED RECRUITING PROCEDURE

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**Human resource management - Intervention Logic** (continuation)

**ACTIVITIES**

**DIRECT OUTPUTS**

**OUTCOMES**

**IMPACT**

IMPROVED CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN THE ADMINISTRATION

Analysing the HRM function in public institutions, developing the competency framework in government agencies, APs and LGUs

Establishment and development of the information system for HRM in state institutions and institutions of AP and LGUs

Preparation of APs to strengthen the capacity of HR units in state administrative bodies

Development of competency-based trainings for managers and HR units

Analysing models and applying different tools for career development and retention of professional, efficient and innovative staff

Establishment of a talent management system

Preparation of studies and analyses on work engagement models for civil servants

Analysing and developing recommendations for the creation and implementation of career models

Normative regulation of civil servants' salaries and implementation of normative solutions in the area of public sector salary system reform

Developing and applying tools for the career development of managers

Reform of the salary system for civil servants

Analysis and generation of recommendations to improve the quality of job performance evaluation of civil servants

Analyse the situation and set up a quality management unit for HRM and MPALSG/HRMS

IMPROVISED COMPETENCY EVALUATION SYSTEM FOR CIVIL SERVANTS

IMPROVED CAPACITY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Analysis of the organisation of the HRM function in the state administrative bodies and the bodies of APs and LGUs

**BETTER QUALITY AND MORE EFFICIENT WORK OF EMPLOYEES IN THE STATE ADMINISTRATION**

**HIGHER QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

**STATE ADMINISTRATION AND LSGs ATTRACT, HIRE AND RETAIN COMPETENT, EFFICIENT AND MOTIVATED STAFF**

**Human resource management - Intervention Logic** (continuation)

**ACTIVITIES**

**DIRECT OUTPUTS**

**OUTCOMES**

**IMPACT**

Conducting the process of planning and formulating amendments to the regulations on professional development in state institutions, LGU institutions and public administration

Preparation of studies on professional development and optimisation of business processes in public administration using ICT

Establishment organisational units to standardise processes and quality systems in the field of professional development in public administration

Strengthening technical (ICT) capacities in the area of professional development in the administration

Strengthening the strategic approach and tools to improve the professionalisation of the person in the position

Strengthening the capacity of managers, government agencies and LGU authorities for the successful implementation of the Unified System for Professional Development

Development of new training programmes - innovative and dedicated programmes for trainees and persons training for independent work in the profession

Further development of the methodological approach and tools to improve the various elements (aspects) of the unique system or professional development in state institutions and LGU institutions

Improving the use of innovative forms of professional training

Development of training programmes and capacity building for the promotion of persons in positions

Support in the preparation and implementation of special training programmes in state institutions and institutions of local self-government units

Analysis of the regulations for professional development in state and local authorities and public administration

IMPROVED WORK OF INDIVIDUALS IN POSITION

IMPLEMENTED TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STATE AND LGU BODIES

IMPROVED UNIQUE SYSTEM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

IMPROVED LEGAL REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

STRENGTHENED TECHNICAL (ICT) CAPACITIES IN THE AREA OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**BETTER QUALITY AND MORE EFFICIENT WORK OF EMPLOYEES IN THE STATE ADMINISTRATION**

**HIGHER QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

**STATE ADMINISTRATION AND LSGs ATTRACT, HIRE AND RETAIN COMPETENT, EFFICIENT AND MOTIVATED STAFF**

STANDARDISED PROCESSES AND QUALITY SYSTEMS IN THE FIELD OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

**Human resource management - Intervention Logics** (continuation)

**ACTIVITIES**

**DIRECT OUTPUTS**

**OUTCOMES**

**IMPACT**

DEVELOPED MASTERPLAN MODEL FOR LIFELONG PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Establishing a system for planning and managing the process of lifelong professional development in public administration

Establishment of a legal framework in the area of professional examinations in the state administration

Optimisation of business processes in the area of professional examinations in state administration

Analyses and proposals for improvement measures in the area of professional examinations in the state administration system

Creation of tools to support the implementation of the system of training personnel for public administration

Improving the cooperation between among institutions and special professional organisations responsible for professional development matters in state bodies

Development of training programmes for students and promotion of professional development in public administration

Improving analytical research and other activities of NAPA in cooperation with higher education institutions and scientific research organisations

STANDARDISED AND IMPROVED ORGANISATION OF PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATIONS WITHIN THE STATE ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM

COOPERATION AMONG INSTITUTIONS AND SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL BODIES RESPONSIBLE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MATTERS IN STATE BODIES IS IMPROVED

ESTABLISHED COOPERATION WITH THE HIGH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION WITH A VIEW OF EDUCATING STAFF FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

**BETTER QUALITY AND MORE EFFICIENT WORK OF EMPLOYEES IN THE STATE ADMINISTRATION**

**HIGHER QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

**STATE ADMINISTRATION AND LSGs ATTRACT, HIRE AND RETAIN COMPETENT, EFFICIENT AND MOTIVATED STAFF**

**SERVICES - Intervention Logics**

**ACTIVITIES**

**DIRECT OUTPUTS**

**OUTCOMES**

**IMPACT**

IMPROVED PROCESSES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW AND OPTIMISATION OF EXISTING SERVICES

Establishment, implementation and promotion of quality management tools in the public administration - CAF

Identifying the need to improve physical accessibility to services for members of vulnerable and at-risk groups and members of minority communities by improving physical access and territorial accessibility to services - Analysis with recommendations

Improvement of the capacity and equipment of the Administrative Inspectorate

Establishing a regulatory, institutional and methodological framework for a system of monitoring, control and quality assurance of services

Strengthening the regulatory framework for the development of new services and the optimisation of existing ones

Improvement of e-services

Planning and development of capacity building programmes for civil servants

Analyses and lists of administrative procedures

Organising training and capacity building for civil servants

Strengthening the strategic approach to the development of new and optimisation of existing services

Establishment of administrative one-stop-shops in the territory of local self-government units

Establishing legal framework requiring the creation of a comprehensive and up-to-date electronic record of administrative procedures/services in the form of a public register

INCREASED HUMAN, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL CAPACITY OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO END USERS

IMPROVED SYSTEM FOR CONTROLLING AND MONITORING THE QUALITY OF SERVICE PROVISION

IMPROVED QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM OF SERVICE DELIVERY

DATA ON USER SATISFACTION WITH THE QUALITY OF SERVICES IS AVAILABLE

**A SYSTEM FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND CONTROL OF SERVICES HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED**

**END USERS ARE SATISFIED WITH THE PUBLIC SERVICES PROVIDED**

INCREASED HUMAN AND TECHNICAL CAPACITY FOR SERVICE PROVISION

Measuring/conducting surveys on end-user satisfaction with the services provided and calculate indicators

Promotion and popularisation of e-services

ESTABLISHED PHYSICALLY ONE-STOP-SHOP IN LSGs

AWARENESS OF E-SERVICES HAS BEEN RAISED

**Accountability and transparency - Intervention Logics**

**ACTIVITIES**

**DIRECT OUTPUTS**

**OUTCOMES**

**IMPACT**

ESTABLISHED BASIS FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF MANAGERIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION BODIES

Strengthening the capacities of public administration officials to promote the transparency of the work of public administration

Preparation and adoption of national action plans in the framework of RS participation in the Open Governance Partnership

preparation of studies on professional development and optimisation of business processes in public administration using ICT

Improving the regulatory framework to enhance accountability and transparency in the activities of public administration entities

Strengthening the capacities of PABs and other competent authorities (administrative inspection) for supervision over the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance

Improving the regulatory framework for managerial accountability on the basis of an analysis of the current situation and guidelines for the definition of system solutions in the area of managerial accountability in public administration bodies

Implementing a pilot project to improve management mechanisms in relation to the performance of public administrations

Strengthening the capacity of public administration managers and officials to apply a unique performance management methodology

Strengthening the ability of public administration managers to apply the principles of managerial accountability

Improving the legal framework for performance management in public administration

Establishment of the register of public authority holders

Drafting of documents to improve ethical standards and mechanisms to monitor the implementation of rules for the ethical behaviour of public officials

Implementation of a pilot project for the appointment of ethics and integrity officers in a selected number of public administration bodies

IMPROVED MECHANISMS AND STRENGTHENED CAPACITIES FOR MANAGEMENT ACCORDING TO THE PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT BODIES

IMPROVED REGULATORY FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN THE ACTIVITIES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION BODIES

STRENGTHENED ABILITIES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MANAGERS TO APPLY THE PRINCIPLES OF MANAGERIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

IMPROVED ETHICAL STANDARDS AND MECHANISMS FOR MONITORING THE ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

IMPROVED MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW ON FREEDOM OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE BY STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF THE COMMISSIONER AND OTHER COMPETENT BODIES (ADMINISTRATIVE INSPECTORATE)

**TRANSPARENT PUBLICATION OF DATA HELD BY THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FOR END USERS**

**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION HAS A HIGHER LEVEL OF ACCOUNTABILITY AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT**

**THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FULFILS ITS TASKS MORE TRANSPARENTLY AND RESPONSIBLY**

STRENGTHENED THE CAPACITY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS TO PROMOTE THE TRANSPARENCY OF WORK

THE NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ADOPTED AS PART OF THE RS PARTICIPATION IN THE OGP MEET THE STANDARDS OF THE INITIATIVE

**CO-ORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION - INTERVENTION LOGIC**

**ACTIVITIES**

**DIRECT OUTPUTS**

**OUTCOMES**

**IMPACT**

INCREASED PERSONNEL AND TECHNICAL CAPACITIES FOR THE COORDINATION AND MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF PAR

Development of a risk management system for the PAR SBP using the OMT and the management structures for the PAR and the Sector Reform Agreement

Increasing the resources of the European Integration and International Cooperation Sector, including the contact points for monitoring the implementation of the Sector Budget Support Instrument, the Sector Reform Agreement for the PAR area and the complementary assistance projects

Building the capacity of the European Integration and International Cooperation Sector for donor coordination and project management through training, mentoring and study visits

Increasing the number of executors in the Department for Strategic Planning, MPALSG and training for the coordination and monitoring and evaluation of the PAR

Coordination meetings at administrative and political level

Carrying out a mid-term evaluation of the PAR Strategy 2021-2030 in order to draw up a new action plan for the period after 2025

Extension of the online monitoring tool (OMT) to other public policy documents in the area of PAR and improvement of the PABs web portal

Development of the medium-term expenditure framework and the annual review of PAR expenditure

Training of officials in the Department for Strategic Planning, MPALSG for the coordination and monitoring of the PAR in the area of evaluation and monitoring

GAP analysis and roadmap for recommendations to achieve the PAR-SBS targets for the future implementation of the Sector Reform Contract, its management and monitoring, including the functioning of the “policy dialogue” and other coordination platforms

COORDINATION AT ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLITICAL LEVEL

THE MEDIUM-TERM EXPENDITURE FRAMEWORK AND THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE FRAMEWORK WERE DEFINED

MEDIUM-TERM EVALUATION OF THE PAR STRATEGY CARRIED OUT

ADOPTED ROADMAP FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECTOR REFORM CONTRACT, ITS MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING THROUGH THE “POLITICAL DIALOGUE” AND OTHER COORDINATION PLATFORMS

**EFFICIENT COORDINATION OF MONITORING OF MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES PLANNED BY AP PAR AND DONORS SUPPORT**

**CITIZENS ARE BETTER INFORMED ABOUT PAR**

**MORE EFFICIENT AND INCLUSIVE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PAR**

DEVELOPED RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE PAR SBS

INCREASED CAPACITY BUILDING OF THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION SECTOR FOR MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECTOR BUDGET SUPPORT INSTRUMENT, THE SECTOR REFORM AGREEMENT FOR THE RYU REGION AND FOR DONOR COORDINATION AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

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**Co-ordination and communication - intervention logic** (continuation)

**ACTIVITIES**

**DIRECT OUTPUTS**

**OUTCOMES**

**IMPACT**

Annual survey on information about the process and outputs of the PAR among the employees of the PA bodies by means of an online survey (sending a link by email and posting on the notice board)

Conducting annual surveys among civil servants for information on the process and outputs of the PAR through focus groups with SABs (2 groups) and LSGs (4 groups) employees

Four-day annual workshop for the members of the PAR Communication Coordination Mechanism to develop annual operational plans in line with the AP for the implementation of the PARS (25 participants)

Conducting annual public opinion survey on the public's knowledge of the PAR process and results

Adoption of annual operational plans for PAR communication and quarterly and annual reports on the implementation of the operational plans

Training for PR officers and organisational units for HRM and SAB, LSGs on the importance, methods, channels and instruments of interdepartmental and internal communication of the PAR

Improvement, maintenance and promotion of the Information board and training of Information board administrators as a tool for internal communication

INCREASED CAPACITIES OF PR OFFICERS AND ORGANISATIONAL UNITS FOR HRM AND SAB, LGUS ON THE IMPORTANCE, METHODS, CHANNELS AND INSTRUMENTS OF INTERDEPARTMENTAL AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATION OF THE RAP

THE FINDINGS OF THE ANNUAL PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY AMONG CIVIL SERVANTS ABOUT INFORMATION ON THE PROCESS AND RESULTS OF THE PAR ARE AVAILABLE

**A COORDINATION MECHANISM FOR THE PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE PAR COMMUNICATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL IS IN OPERATION**

**HARMONISATION, STANDARDISATION AND CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION OF PAR WITHIN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

STRENGTHENED HUMAN AND TECHNICAL CAPACITIES FOR THE COMMUNICATION ABOUT THE PAR

FINDINGS OF THE ANNUAL PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY ON THE PUBLIC'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE PAR PROCESS AND RESULTS ARE AVAILABLE

ADOPTED ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLANS FOR PAR COMMUNICATION AND QUARTERLY AND ANNUAL REPORTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OPERATIONAL PLANS

INCREASED TECHNICAL CAPACITY THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF THE INFORMATION BOARD AS AN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION TOOL

**CITIZENS ARE BETTER INFORMED ABOUT PAR**

**MORE EFFICIENT AND INCLUSIVE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PAR**

**Co-ordination and communication - intervention logic** (continuation)

**ACTIVITIES**

**DIRECT OUTPUTS**

**OUTCOMES**

**IMPACT**

MAP OF CAPACITIES OF SABs AND LSGs FOR COMMUNICATING PAR AVAILABLE

Updating and further development of the section of the MPALSG website dedicated to the PAR: regular publication of content, technical improvement (visual redesign, database, new functionalities)

Competition for the best managed profiles on social networks (focus on two-way communication with citizens)

Celebration of International Public Service Day on 23 June (organisation of a competition for the best public servant, rewarding LSGs for results achieved, etc.)

Mapping the capacities of PABs and LSGs for PAR communication (organisation of outreach, communication channels, technical capacities, level of training, etc.). Survey and two focus groups

Training of PAB managers (State Secretaries and Assistant Ministers) and PR staff on PAR communication process and the outputs achieved

Increasing the media's ability to report on the PAR and the outputs achieved through training and briefings

Development and updating guidelines for the creation and maintenance of profiles of SABs and LSGs in social networks

Raising citizens' awareness of their rights vis-à-vis the public administration when it comes to services - through posts in social media, announcements in national and local media outlets, posters in PABs and LSGs

Development and distribution of the PAR Communication Standard with guidelines for the application of unique visual solutions, targeted messages and slogans that will ensure that PABs and LSGs consistently inform the public about the PAR

Promotion of the SKIP Centre as a centre for training PA officials and citizens in the use of information technologies, with a focus on the use of e-services (posts on social media, announcements on the institutions' websites, appearances by SKIP representatives in national and local media outlets)

Communication and promotion activities related to the processes carried out as part of the public administration reform

ADOPTED AND APPLIED GUIDELINES FOR THE CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PROFILES OF SABS AND LGUS IN SOCIAL NETWORKS

RAISED AWARENESS OF CITIZENS AND BUSINESSES ON THEIR RIGHTS AND PAR OUTPUTS

ADOPTED STANDARDS FOR PAR COMMUNICATION

STRENGTHENED HUMAN CAPACITY OF SAB MANAGERS, PRS AND MEDIA TO COMMUNICATE AND REPORT ON PAR AND OUTPUTS ATTAINED

**INCREASING THE VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION ABOUT THE PAR PROCESS AND THE OUTPUTS ACHIEVED**

Preparation and implementation of media promotion process and PAR outputs achieved (quarterly, four areas per year, through media announcements in national (up to 15 national media outlets with 1-3 articles per topic) and local media outlets (up to 25 local media outlets with 3 articles per topic) and promotion of posts on social media)

**CITIZENS ARE BETTER INFORMED ABOUT PAR**

**MORE EFFICIENT AND INCLUSIVE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PAR**

## Annex 8. OVERVIEW OF THE BUDGET

**SUMMARY**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **YEAR** | **FINANCIAL RESOURCES** | **HRM** | | | **Services** | **O&T** | **CO-ORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION** | **TOTAL** |
| **PG 2:** | **PG 3:** | **PG 4:** | **PG 5:** | **PG 6:** |
| 2021 | donor funds - planned | 8400.00 | 5400.00 | 56530.47 | 56981.91 | 2683.50 | 113775.59 | 243771.47 |
|  | donors funds - realised | 3600.00 | 1200.00 | 51480.00 | 120.41 | 0.00 | 8902.45 | 65302.86 |
|  | budget funds- planned | 672.50 | 6412.50 | 0.00 | 40000.00 | 0.00 | 6600.00 | 53685.00 |
|  | donors funds - realised | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2022 | donor funds - planned | 21462.30 | 33578.00 | 31857.02 | 163381.45 | 14502.36 | 91940.00 | 356721.13 |
|  | donors funds - realised | 14862.30 | 2300.00 | 31857.02 | 163381.45 | 9547.86 | 70747.00 | 292695.63 |
|  | budget funds- planned | 725.50 | 59964.00 | 13598.16 | 154327.00 | 30635.65 | 12374.78 | 271625.63 |
|  | donors funds - realised | 0.00 | 40975.20 | 13597.50 | 133485.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 188057.70 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2023 | donor funds - planned | 16336.00 | 30500.10 | 34114.18 | 110462.50 | 20851.86 | 20289.23 | 232553.87 |
|  | donors funds - realised |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | budget funds- planned | 2051.50 | 46800.00 | 15338.16 | 68696.00 | 44145.02 | 16135.41 | 193166.09 |
|  | donors funds - realised |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2024 | donor funds - planned | 13658.42 | 31500.00 | 8866.00 | 35856.30 | 1965.49 | 5494.02 | 97340.23 |
|  | donors funds - realised |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | budget funds- planned | 251.50 | 35100.00 | 10885.32 | 65842.16 | 32592.05 | 16135.41 | 160806.44 |
|  | donors funds - realised |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2025 | donor funds - planned | 9938.42 | 43944.00 | 5608.00 | 3256.30 | 1726.82 | 5745.57 | 70219.11 |
|  | donors funds - realised |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | budget funds- planned | 251.50 | 58500.00 | 249085.32 | 64492.16 | 32592.05 | 16135.41 | 421056.44 |
|  | donors funds - realised |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**The total amount of funds by source of financing in 000 dinars**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| donor funds - planned | **1000605.81** |  |  |
| donors funds - realised | **357998.49** |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| budget funds- planned | **1100339.06** |  |  |
| donors funds - realised | **188057.70** |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **\*Special Objective 2:** IMPROVED RECRUITMENT PROCESS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION | | | | |
| **\*Special Objective 3:** EFFICIENT CAREER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM APPLIED IN PRACTICE | | | | |
| **\*Special Objective 4:** FUNCTIONING AND INNOVATIVE SYSTEM OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATIONS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION | | | | |
| **\*Special Objective 5:** THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROVIDES IN AN EFFICIENT AND INNOVATIVE WAY SERVICES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF END-USERS AND IMPROVE THEIR USER EXPERIENCE | | | | |
| **\*Special Objective 6:** IMPROVED ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT | | | | |
| **Operational Plan:** CO-ORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION | | | | |

## Annex 9. Analysis of the survey for administrative bodies

**Analysis of the survey results**

In the course of the field phase, an online survey was organised. It covered all administration bodies. The aim of this survey was to gather opinions and experiences from the administrative bodies on the approach, key outputs and challenges, and driving forces. The research specifically gathered views and reflections on the outputs achieved by the reform in the three areas covered by the Action Plan: human resource management, services, and accountability and transparency of public administration. The survey was open from 5 to 29 September 2023.

The questionnaire consists of 13 closed and open questions and took about 10 minutes to complete. SurveyMonkey® was used as the online survey tool. The survey link was sent to 25,400 users - civil servants, including local government employees, courts and prosecutors - of which 2.8% (711 users) completed the survey by 29 September 2023.

**Description of the respondent**

The analysis is based on the responses of 711 users. Most responses came from ministries (51.63%), while 34.61% of users chose the second answer. Only 9.08% were responses from specific organisations, i.e. 4.68% were users of government services. Out of 711 questionnaires submitted, 705 chose the type of administrative body, while 6 users skipped this question.

**To what extent have the outputs in *HRM* area contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of your organisation?**

Out of a total of 711 questionnaires submitted, 706 users responded to this question, while 5 users skipped this question.

**Improved staff planning process**

When asked to what extent the outputs in the area of improving the staff planning process have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed somewhat (34.8%). 25.57% of users believe that they have contributed to a great extent; 15.06% of users believe that they have not contributed at all, 14.77% of users are not aware of the extent to which the outputs have contributed, while 9.8% of users believe that the outputs in the area of improving the staff planning process have fully contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Improved competency framework**

When it comes to the extent to which the improvement of the competence framework has contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that it has (34.43%). 28.71% of users believe that it has contributed to a great extent, 13.43% of users are not aware of the extent to which the outputs have contributed, 13.14% of users believe that the outputs have not contributed at all, while 10.29% of users believe that the outputs in the area of improving the competency framework have fully contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Improved selection and induction process of new employees**

When assessing the results in the area of improving the selection process and induction of new staff into the profession that have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users consider that they have contributed somewhat (31.21%). 26.52% of users consider that they have contributed to a great extent. 19.72% of users feel that the outputs have not contributed at all, 12.20% of users are not aware of the extent to which the outputs have contributed, while 10.235% of users feel that the outputs in the area of improving the selection process and onboarding of new staff have fully contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Improving the merit-based recruiting process**

As regards the results in the area of improved procedures for filling posts on the merit-base that have contributed to the improvement of the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed somewhat (29.8%), 26.65% believe that the outputs have not contributed at all, while on the contrary 18.19% of users believe that they have contributed to a great extent. 17.34% of users are not aware of the extent to which the outputs have contributed, while 8.02% of users believe that the outputs have improved in the area of merit-based appointment procedures have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Improved career development process**

When asked to what extent the outputs in the area of improving the career development process have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed somewhat (33.33%), 24.14% believe that the outputs have not contributed at all, while on the contrary 21.12% of users believe that they have contributed greatly. 13.22% of users are not clear about the extent to which the outputs have contributed, while 8.19% of users believe that the outputs in the area of improving the career development process have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Improved system for evaluating the work of civil servants**

When it comes to the outputs in the area of improving the performance evaluation system for civil servants that have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed somewhat (32.86%), 23.86% believe that the outputs have not contributed at all, while on the contrary 21.29% of users believe that they have contributed to a great extent. 11.29% of users are not aware of the extent to which the outputs have contributed, while 10.71% of users believe that the outputs in the area of improving the system for evaluating the work of civil servants have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Improved capacity of organisational units for human resource management**

The evaluation of the results shows that the outputs in the area of improving the capacity of the organisational units for human resources management have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution. The majority of users believe that they have contributed somewhat (33%), 20.86% believe that the outputs have contributed to a great extent, while 18.71% of users do not know to what extent the results have contributed. 17.43% of users believe that the outputs have not contributed at all, while 10% of users believe that the outputs in the area of improving the capacity of organisational units for human resource management have fully contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Training and professional development**

When asked to what extent the outputs in the area of training and professional development have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed somewhat (32.91%), 32.48% believe that the outputs have not contributed at all, while on the contrary 20.37% of users believe that they have contributed greatly. 8.26% of users believe that the outputs have not contributed at all, while 5.98% of users do not know to what extent the outputs of the training and professional development have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Internship in state administration bodies**

When it comes to the outputs in the area of student internship in state administration bodies that have contributed to the improvement of the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed to some extent (30%), 29.57% of users are not aware of the extent to which the outputs have contributed, while 17.97% of users believe that the outputs have contributed to a great extent. 14.2% of users believe that the outputs have not contributed at all, while 8.26% of users believe that the outputs in the area of student internship in state administration bodies fully contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Respondents' answers/comments**

Some of the respondents' answers, which concern the improvement of the staff planning process, the improvement of the selection process and introduction of new employees to the job, the merit-based filling of positions, the improvement of the selection process and the introduction of new employees to the job, the improvement of the career development process, the improvement of the evaluation system of civil servants, improved capacities of organisational units for HRM, improvement of training and professional development and student internship in state administration bodies are shown below:

* The personnel plan is prepared - copy-pasted. Staff are recruited on temporary and part-time contracts to which the competency framework does not apply. The body does not have a human resources department.
* Nothing has been put into practice. The body where I work really only has one person (a junior consultant) who performs HR duties. The institution does not recognise employee's desire for professional development and training. Staff development planning is subjective and it all boils down to the interpretations of the people in the position who retain their “frozen” management positions. There are problems in communication and organisation. The middle management level does not exist and all the pressure is on the civil servants.
* Career development should be merits-based. As much as the employee selection process has been improved by a stricter selection of candidates through the introduction of competences, the development of new hires is slowed down by the promotion of incompetent staff.
* New employees often do not have adequate professions, so there is nothing to improve, but it starts all over again, which puts additional strain on work processes. The civil service does not recognise so-called careers, only work. Furthermore, there are no incentives for additional training. Only basic studies are recognised.
* There is no internship for students in our administration.
* Normatively, the solutions are solid. However, there is a lack of good application. In other words, practice does not follow the norms.
* Nobody takes note of or evaluates the work results of individual civil servants; they are only promoted according to subjective judgement.
* The filling of the positions is not based on work ability and merit.
* "Improved procedures for selection and induction of new staff" - Explanation: the procedure takes a very long time and is complicated, both for those who carry it out and for the candidates. It generally discourages potential candidates from applying, which is another reason, in addition to the salary in the state administration, that makes it impossible to attract quality and motivated specialised staff. “Improved career development process” - the idea is good, but it is not realistically enforceable in accordance with other legal regulations, restrictions on promotion and generally the possibility of implementation in full capacity. "Improved capacity of organisational units for HRM” - the HRM units are more burdened than before, i.e. obligations in various procedures have been added and the procedures have also become more complicated, while the number of employees has remained the same.
* The procedures are regulated by law, and merit is not taken into account.
* Personnel planning is not based on the criteria of job requirements and competences for the job, but on criteria that are not described in the labour law regulations. The selection of employees and their induction to work is also not based on the above criteria, but again on criteria that do not correspond to the prescribed ones. Like the evaluation, career process, etc.
* Due to the minimum number of employees in groups - one to two - and the excessive volume of work, it is not possible to process everything that is required within the legal time frame. So logically, due to the speed of work, the quality of this work is reduced. As per the possibilities of improvement or simply following the laws of their amendments and similar, there is not even a little time left. Despite all of the above, the evaluation of the work of civil servants does not make sense, and where it exists, it is usually not merit-based.
* There is no progression since educated people are not being recruited for jobs, who would get trained as trainees and see this as a normal way of learning and advancement. That is because with a few years of experience s/he can become a senior consultant according to who knows what criteria. On the other hand, professionals soon to be retires work as consultants or independent advisor. If the right kind of work isn't appreciated, where can motivation be found?
* There is minimal concern for staff and their professional development.
* Everything is complicated and the focus has shifted to formal matters while the essentials have been neglected.
* New employees are not interested in being properly induced to the work. Trainings are generic and there is no training with real-life examples to help with operational work.
* Imbalance between the defined tasks and objectives and the number and structure of employees, overload with entering data and filling in statistics, which affects the quality of the body' work.
* Rigidity in all respects, negative selections or lack of selections. There is no motivation for young people to work in the state administration, material ineligibility for requirements. Older employees are marginalised, the law does not recognise the acquired right of a civil servant. It can punish him and lower the coefficients, etc.
* Supervisors pay little attention to the training of new employees and leave it to other managers to help them. There is no student internship.
* Continuous professional development is not planned; the person performing the duties of a lawyer has not been able to participate in any continuing professional development or any other type of continuing professional development for 3 years. The same employees, who are privileged for some reason, always have the right to professional development. In my opinion, personnel planning process is not based on the actual need for jobs, i.e. the need for certain professions, for people with certain experience who would have the competence to fulfil these tasks. It is however based on completely different criteria. New employees have no mentors, no one introduces them to the work, they often sit idle for days and do not know what their job is. Positions are not filled on the basis of the performance, nor is it a decisive criterion; the performance is hardly evaluated at all.
* There is no change compared to the last 20 years.
* Staff capacities are disproportionate to the volume of work, which is the greatest threat to the implementation of the public administration reform strategy. In concrete terms, the body where I work is 5 to 6 times short of staff. Working under such circumstances is not only impossible, but also harmful in many ways, especially for the health of employees. Working with 600% fewer employees means that work keeps piling up, leading to congestion and total inefficiency. With the introduction of e-Office, the problem will become even more noticeable. I realise that this is not a new problem, it has been around for years.
* Recruitment is still done on a political basis, as is promotion.
* There are still unfilled posts and the workload of employees is high. There are no recognisable differences in staff planning. The training system is good. It is necessary to make serious promotions in the state administration to attract professional staff. Employees are poorly or not at all motivated for professional development.
* Regardless of the fact that the methods of selection, evaluation, etc. have changed, one gets the impression that everything is done according to the old principle, copying and lack of inventiveness. Lack of willingness to accept new and improved systems of work.
* Absolutely complicated and unusable competency assessment forms, completely confused tables that give neither employees nor managers an understandable and transparent picture that could be applied. Completely chaotic, unnecessary, overly detailed and unusable. Unrelated to the procedures used so far, which have traditionally proven to be good and applicable and which have been used quite well for many years - categorisation by job. If the competences are not linked to the classification, they will certainly not be applicable or used.
* Weak assessment of employees, poor quality of organised training, low percentage of students in administrations.
* In the sector in which I work, there is neither short-term nor long-term staff planning; no-one looks after the career development of existing staff. Employees generally take care of the training courses they should attend themselves and try to improve themselves. There is no internship for students in our sector.
* Because the HR service only exists on paper...it does not deal with the development of competences, the improvement of employees' work. It is still at the level of the administrative personnel units...papers, holidays, decisions and similar paperwork.
* Improved procedures for selecting and inducting new staff - it all still boils down to form and not substance.
* The capacity of the HR units has remained at the same level as before the reform and the improvement process has been extremely slow.
* I think that staff planning is not done because the training of new young individuals who could be trained before the older ones retire is not timely planned.
* The essence of the working method and capacity has remained unchanged, so the change is not visible at all. On the contrary, with the changes, many new procedures and practices have been introduced (and some new difficulties of a technical but not essential nature), so the volume of work and practices has increased considerably.
* It is difficult to hire new employees because previous work with the previous employer is not recognised if a person with professional experience comes from other legal entities and not from state authorities. This is a major obstacle to hiring experienced people and, for example, at least 3 years of work experience is required for inspection work. A person who is already working somewhere will not switch to the state administration because the salaries are lower there, moreover, they have no work experience and start at the lowest salary level of the profession.
* Staff planning has not been improved, the number of employees is not sufficient for everyone to do their work in a committed and detailed manner, there is no money in the budget for new posts; staff management is still at the administrative-operational level; student internships are short-lived...

**To what extent have the outputs in the area of *Services* contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of your organisation?**

Out of a total of 711 questionnaires submitted, 702 users responded to this question, while 9 users skipped this question.

**Development of new and optimisation of existing services**

When asked to what extent the outputs in the area of creating new and optimising existing services have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed to some extent (38.45%), 26.11% believe that they have contributed to a great extent, while 15.93% do not know to what extent the results have contributed. 9.9% believe that the outputs have fully contributed, while 9.61% of users believe that the outputs in the area of creating new and optimising existing services have not contributed at all to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Development of e-Services**

Looking at the outputs in the area of e-Services development and their contribution to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed to a great extent (38.11%), 32.95% believe that they have contributed to some extent, while 14.04% believe that they have contributed completely. On the other hand, 8.31% are not aware of the extent to which they have contributed, while 6.59% believe that the outputs in the area of e-Service development have not contributed at all to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Increased human and technical/technological capacities for the provision of services to end users**

When asked to what extent the outputs in the area of increasing human and technical-technological capacity to provide services to end users have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed to some extent (35.20%), 25.14% believe that the outputs have contributed to a great extent, while 14.8% believe that they have not contributed at all. On the other hand, 13.65% of respondents are not aware of the extent to which they have contributed, while 11.21% believe that the outputs in the area of increasing human and technical-technological capacity to provide services to end users have fully contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the organisation.

**Respondents' answers/comments**

Some of the respondents' answers related to the creation of new and optimisation of existing services, the development of e-Services and the human and technical/technological capacity to provide services to end users are listed below:

* Services have not improved; it can be said that they have regressed in the face of technological progress. Employees are not familiarised and introduced to new information technologies. Employees who are even the slightest bit interested are assigned new work tasks without compensation, while the uninterested and incompetent are privileged.
* Absolute electronic illiteracy of employees - cases upon requirements stand for a year. No one responds.
* Although the volume of work involving the use of web platforms is increasing, there is no way to increase the number of employees, nor are employees who learn and work all the new platforms rewarded.
* Smaller number of employees, outdated equipment.
* Human capacity does not match the demand and volume of work. Technical equipment of 38 inspectors - computers, only 2 computers are 5 years old, the others are over 10 years old. Laptops - only 1 functional. Official Android phones - none. Official cars of 2005 and 2006.
* Non-functioning e-Government, scanners, printers, computers are outdated.
* Novelties only brought in one additional business. The essence, which is necessary remained at the same level. Certain new services are not even available to everyone (e.g. the electronic signature).
* There is a lack of human and technical-technological capacities on a large scale.
* Because everything is more complicated and unfinished and does not contribute to work efficiency.
* The technical- technological capacities relate only to the database, which has only a statistical purpose, takes up a lot of working time and does not contribute to the quality of the services provided.
* The DMS system introduced for e-commerce is impractical and complicated.
* E-mail has been around for 30 years and our administration is still at the level of email. None of the software on which citizens' money was spent from the budget was not implemented according to the customer's requirements or did not have the intended functionality or only achieved partial functionality or its implementation broke all deadlines, although it was paid for as if the software had been developed in Silicon Valley in California. In this context, my colleagues and I ask ourselves what is the point of acquiring different software (many of which are even more primitive than the previous ones that have been replaced) if we still have to store everything in paper or even more papers? At the same time, due to the lack of trust in the e-system, i.e. the possibility of misuse, employees create everything in paper form. In addition, the e-Registry Office, which was designed back in 2008, is not working. The new software does not yet have full functionality and employees were trained almost two years ago. People do not download the application to work in the e-Registry Office (rightly so, they do not want to waste their phone space on it), they want to work with a chipped ID card and the system does not allow it (even though the ID card with chip was introduced by law 15 years ago).
* I believe that the improvement of technological processes does not go hand in hand with adequate technical equipment and existing capacities.
* New young people who want to work are not recruited.
* We do not have enough staff, and we do not have enough technical and technological capacity.
* Human and technical-technological capacities for providing services to users have not been increased - slow Internet, old computers, weak co-operation with technical people for maintenance of existing computers, electronic services have been developed, but double and even triple records have not been abolished, which leads to excessive administration and reduction of effective time for providing real services.
* If you do not link responsibilities to the existing classification by speciality, you will not achieve results. Complicated and inapplicable process tables absolutely inapplicable and
* Human resources have not been increased at all, and the mere increase in technical and technological capacity makes no sense if there are no people to manage technique and technology.
* The political cadre engaged in temporary-service contracts is quickly consumed by the enthusiasm of an ineffective administration.
* Because colleagues are old and don't know how to use what they have been given, we younger ones waste our time while we finish what they cannot.
* I see no change and no progress, no new service that meets the needs of our work.

**To what extent have the outputs in *the Accountability and transparency* area contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of your organisation?**

Out of a total of 711 questionnaires submitted, 699 users responded to this question, while 12 users skipped this question.

**Introduction of managerial accountability in institutions**

When assessing the extent to which the outputs in the area of introducing managerial accountability in institutions have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed somewhat (33.05%), 28.3% believe that they have contributed to a great extent, while 15.8% do not know to what extent the outputs have contributed. On the other hand, 13.04% of the respondents believe that the outputs have not contributed at all, while 9.91% of the users believe that the outputs in the area of introducing leadership responsibility in institutions have fully contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Improved mechanisms and increased capacity for management according to the institution's performance (the results of the institution's work are measured)**

When asked to what extent the outputs in the area of improving mechanisms and strengthening management capacity according to the institution's performance (measured by the results of the institution's work) have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed somewhat (35.51%), 26.09% believe that they have contributed to a great extent, while 17.83% did not know to what extent the outputs have contributed. 13.04% believe that the outputs have not contributed at all, while 7.54% of users believe that the outputs in the area of improving mechanisms and strengthening management capacity according to the institution's performance have fully contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Improved ethical standards and mechanisms for monitoring the ethical behaviour of public officials**

When it comes to the outputs in the area of improving ethical standards and mechanisms for monitoring the ethical behaviour of civil servants and their contribution to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed somewhat (35.59%), 25.36% believe that they have contributed to a great extent, while 16.86% do not know to what extent the outputs have contributed. On the other hand, 12.68% believe that the outputs have not contributed at all, while 9.51% of users believe that the outputs in the area of improving ethical standards and mechanisms for monitoring the ethical behaviour of civil servants have fully contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Strengthen the capacity of administrators to promote transparency in its work (to open up data and produce information about the work)**

When asked to what extent the outputs in the area of strengthening the capacity of administrators to improve the transparency of its work (for opening data and producing information about the work) have contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution, the majority of users believe that they have contributed somewhat (34.39%), 27.63% believe that they have contributed to a great extent, while 16.12% did not know to what extent the outputs have contributed. 13.53% of users believe that the outputs have fully contributed, while 8.35% of users believe that the outputs have not contributed at all to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Improved implementation and monitoring of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance through strengthened capacity of the Commissioner and other relevant authorities**

When it comes to the outputs in the area of improving the implementation and monitoring of the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Interest by strengthening the capacity of the Commissioner and other competent authorities, the majority of users believe that they have contributed to some extent (30.70%), 28.98% believe that they have contributed to a great extent, while 17.22% do not know to what extent the outputs have contributed. On the other hand, 14.92% of users believe that the outputs have fully contributed, while 8.18% of users believe that the outputs have not contributed at all to improving the functioning and capacity of the institution.

**Respondents' answers/comments**

Some of the respondents' answers related to the introduction of managerial accountability in the institutions, the improvement of mechanisms and capacities for performance-based management, improved ethical standards and mechanisms for monitoring the ethical behaviour of civil servants, and the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Interest are listed below:

* The impact of the transparency of the institution's work is not visible, although social criticism could improve and enhance the work. The Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance is widely abused and burdens public services without achieving any prescribed effect.
* The management structure does not take into account the existing mechanisms for monitoring the institution's performance. The ethical aspect is not present in the work of the institution.
* The search for irrelevant data, a big commitment and a waste of time.
* The unethical behaviour of employees, even those with a temporary service contract, is not punished when they are “protected”.
* I do not see how the introduction of management accountability is reflected in the day-to-day work of the institution. I do not see the results of the institution's work reflected back.
* Performance, responsibility and work are not evaluated.
* It is formally monitored, but in fact it is weak. No particular impact is seen.
* The public is insufficiently represented in the work.
* For years, individuals have abused the right of access to information of public importance by sending the same request to hundreds of schools, targeting both schools and the Commissioner to file mass lawsuits.
* The inertia, ignorance and lack of commitment of employees and especially the administrative structure.
* Abuse of institutions by individuals.
* Management standards depend on who is protecting you, not on realistic standards, and as for ethical standards, they do not exist.
* On the contrary, responsibility “falls” on the lowest clerk and every action is initialled by everyone in the hierarchy. There has been no strengthening of staff capacity in this body. The capacity of this body has not been strengthened to act upon the requests of public importance, and until recently this work was carried out by a technical person who, according to the system, was not intended for this type of work, but carried out work from the work area of another group. Also, with the amendment of the Law on Free Access to Information... this type of work is made more difficult, as information seekers are given the possibility of making an unlimited number of requests with the same or similar questions, with which they can request extensive documentation, as well as an increased number of complaints due to the introduction of the possibility of filing a motion to instigate misdemeanour proceedings by the Commissioner.
* The increasing responsibility for processing individual requests lies with the lowest civil servant in the vertical hierarchy - the processors, even though each file is initialled and signed by everyone in the hierarchy. Capacity building in this body has not been realised. The capacity of this body for processing requests for access to information of public importance has not been strengthened and until recently this work was done by a technical person who, according to the systematisation of jobs, was not intended for this type of work, but carried out work from the work area of another group in this body. Also, with the amendment of the Law of 2023, this type of work is made more difficult, as information seekers are given the possibility of making an unlimited number of requests with the same or similar questions, with which they can request extensive documentation, as well as an increased number of complaints due to the introduction of the possibility of filing a motion to instigate misdemeanour proceedings by the Commissioner.
* There is virtually no responsibility for failures in the management structure; responsibility is usually transferred to an employee.
* Everything is done formally, everything is known to us, but the practice has nothing to do with the strategy, everything is solved politically, by force, without the presence of responsibilities.
* As far as I know, the capacity of the Commissioner is very limited and insufficient, because it takes a long time to decide on complaints.
* The Law on Free Access to information of Public Importance is still the most common way for lawyers to earn extra money when they have no other option. The Commissioner's monitoring must take into account the actual needs of the information seeker when a circular mail is sent to hundreds of companies and institutions. For people requesting such information from a public body, it is fine because the risk of misuse is lower. And otherwise, it is an open secret that in most cases this is done to collect the lawyers’ costs of the proceedings and share them with the party.
* There is no feedback on the data collected, i.e. what the requested information was needed for by our institution. It is necessary to schedule extra time (outside working hours) to collect the requested information as the deadlines are short.
* There is no control mechanism to monitor ethics.
* What management function are we talking about when assistant ministers (who are among the holders of management functions) are taken out of the system of state administration; they are mostly working in the acting capacity, in often cased without inadequate knowledge, and with dubious university degrees. Not only is the performance system not measured, but when it is measured, it is measured inappropriately (e.g. a billion more was spent on subsidies, that is not performance, performance is what was achieved when that billion was spent, by what percentage something improved compared to before). At the same time, results and data are often falsified to avoid showing that something is worse than the baseline and to shirk responsibility.
* Things work the same, which does not mean they are bad, but the improvement is not noticed.
* The information that someone requests from schools in early September, when we all have our hands full, is for the sole purpose of not answering it in time for them to sue the school and split the profits with the lawyers If that changes, then this law will make sense.
* The Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance is being abused.
* The Law on Free Access to information of Public Importance gives all rights to individuals, and does not oblige them to do anything, which leaves wide scope for abuse of the law.
* No one is responsible for what is done or not done, there is no personal responsibility.
* The ethical behaviour of civil servants is at its lowest level since I worked in government administration for over 20 years. Existing standards are not respected or applied. Public relations are at a very low level; information of public importance is only given when the Commissioner intervenes. It is difficult to obtain information after the regular procedure.
* None of the changes introduced had an impact on existing work processes.
* It is not possible to measure the results of the institution's work as the objectives are not set in such a way that they can be accurately measured, i.e. there are no adequate mechanisms on the basis of which failure to fulfil the objective would be sanctioned.

**How do you assess the changes in your institutions in terms of human resource capacities when you compare 2021 and 2023?**

Out of a total of 711 questionnaires submitted, 700 users responded to this question, while 11 users skipped this question.

According to the questionnaires submitted, the majority of users (30.43%) believe that there is no particular change in the capacity of HR resources between 2021 and 2023. However, a large number of respondents see improvements to a large extent (21.43%) and to some extent (27.43%). To a lesser extent, the opinion is that the situation has worsened (15%), while 5.71% of respondents do not know.

**What is the progress made vis-a-vis following outputs using your institution as an example?**

Out of a total of 711 questionnaires submitted, 690 users responded to this question, while 21 users skipped this question.

Based on the data analysis, we can see that respondents predominantly see either minor or solid progress within the recognised outcomes (responses from 30-35% of respondents), while 10-20% of respondents recognise significant progress. Detailed results can be found in the table below.

What is the progress made vis-a-vis following outputs using your institution as an example?

**What are some of the main challenges with regard to the sustainability of the changes launched/implemented in the public administration system?**

Out of a total of 711 questionnaires submitted, 688 users responded to this question, while 23 users skipped this question. Respondents had the option of selecting more than one answer.

According to the questionnaires submitted, the most common challenges identified by the respondents (30-50%) for the sustainability of the changes introduced/implemented in public administration are financial challenges (50.44%); lack of institutional capacity and human resources (56.25%); lack of trainees and new staff selected for their competences (39.83%); lack of vision and knowledge among managers (30.38%); lack of internal communication within and between institutions (30.23%), while other challenges were recognised to a lesser extent, namely frequent elections and changes (28.05%); lack of knowledge about ways to implement changes and reforms (25.73%); lack of monitoring and control of the implementation of planned measures in the PAR (11.34%); insufficient involvement of civil society (citizens, civil society organisations, media, academia, etc.) in planning and reporting processes for regulations and public policy documents (users are not asked what the real challenges are on the ground) (13.52%); lack of external communication about changes, rights and obligations and the importance of reform activities (14.39%). Only 2.76% of respondents believe that there are other important challenges in relation to the sustainability of the changes introduced/implemented in the public administration system.

**In your opinion, which driving forces are important for achieving outputs in the field of public administration reform? (you can choose more than one answer):**

Out of a total of 711 questionnaires submitted, 689 users responded to this question, while 22 users skipped this question. Respondents had the option of selecting more than one answer.

According to the questionnaires submitted, as recognised driving forces relevant to achieving results in the area of public administration reform, we note that they are broadly evenly distributed across all the responses offered: The European Union accession process (31.79%); Economic stability (59.80%); Political stability (39.04%); Active civil society (19.74%); Presence of political will and vision (30.04%); Sufficient staff capacity for the scope and different types of work (48.33%); Expertise of administrative staff (60.38%); Encouraging working environment (46.73%). Only 2.18% of respondents believe that there are other driving forces that are considered important for achieving outputs in the area of public administration reform.

**Other comments, reflections or feedback on the implementation of the action plan**

This question gave respondents the opportunity to provide their own comments in the form of reflections or other feedback on the implementation of the action plan. A larger number of respondents (659) skipped this question, while only (52) gave an answer. Some of the most common responses, reproduced in their entirety, are listed below:

* Weekly communication with those interested in improving work and reforms, continuous monitoring of results, insight into potential problems and urgent work to resolve them.
* The administration should work well, although in practice not everything goes according to plan, we manage, but we lack staff.
* Management staff are rarely selected on the basis of experience, knowledge and expertise. They are selected on the basis of political suitability.
* I expect the public registers to be better connected.
* Staff are insufficiently motivated (low salaries and great responsibility, poor equipment, no recruitment of new, younger staff due to retirements and heavy workload, remaining staff with an average age of 58), evaluation of work according to a “template” ...
* With more mutual co-operation and investment in personnel, it will be possible to achieve faster and better implementation of the Action Plan.
* Schools can in no way be treated as public enterprises, and decision-makers need to understand this. The peculiarities of the education system must be taken into account, because this makes no sense.
* Absolutely insufficient number of employees, with specific data on the age structure of existing employees in terms of 60+, and no recruitment of young employees who should and could be trained the current staff, who would prepare them for further work in all areas of state administration.
* I believe that it is necessary to create a system that truly values the work and performance of employees, as the existing system does not allow for this. It is also necessary to establish a system for promoting professions with the definition of fringe benefits to attract potential new employees, as well as a mechanism for retaining competent and professional employees.
* Having worked in government administration for decades, I have to say that staffing capacity is the biggest problem. To my knowledge, many state bodies have this problem. Those who make staff policy must understand that a good civil servant is not created overnight. It takes years of hard work, study and practice. I am sorry that I have no one to pass on my knowledge and experience. Many of my colleagues are also in this situation.
* Labour relations, responsibilities, promotion, evaluation, etc. should also be regulated in other public bodies as stipulated in the Law on Civil Servants.
* If the LSGs continues to be sent complicated and unreadable tables with complicated and unreadable processes and responsibilities, it unlikely to go anywhere fruitful and all the good that has been done by amending the LGAP and introducing electronic government will return to an uncertain beginning instead of developing and applying the existing processes under new conditions. It is necessary that everything is tied to the existing classification by subject area.
* Public administration reform is not possible without technical and financial support.

## Annex 10. Analysis of the survey for civil society

In addition to the survey for the public administration, an online survey was also conducted for civil society organisations. The survey was distributed with the help of the WeBeR project and aimed to gather perceptions and feedback from organisations on the outcomes, challenges and drivers of public administration reform. The survey was open from 5 to 29 September 2023.

The questionnaire consists of 10 closed and open questions and took about 10 minutes to complete. SurveyMonkey® was used as the online survey tool. The link to the survey was sent to all organisations that are members of the WeBeR platform. The survey was completed by 11 representatives of civil society organisations. All respondents answered the majority of the questions. The most important answers collected in the survey are presented below.

**Reform initiatives and their results and challenges**

The respondents are somewhat familiar with the reform initiatives in the area of HRM. While no organisation is fully familiar with the reform initiatives in this area, some organisations are familiar with the reform of the competency framework, the evaluation of the work of civil servants, the development of cooperation with higher education institutions for the purpose of training public administration staff and continuing professional development (see graph below).



On average, more respondents were at least somewhat familiar with the different areas of service reform. While the area of improving the system of safety, control and monitoring the quality of service delivery is less familiar to CSOs, areas such as e-Service development, optimisation and one-stop-shop, and user satisfaction data collection procedures are known to a greater extent by a larger number of respondents (see graph below).

Five civil society organisations believe that services have improved somewhat in 2021, while five organisations believe that there are no particular changes.

In the area of accountability and transparency, organisations are at least somewhat or significantly familiar with all areas. Most organisations are familiar with the area of preparation and adoption of national action plans in the context of RS participation in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) (one completely, three to a considerable extent and five to some extent), as well as with the amendment of the law on free access to information (one completely, three to a considerable extent and four to some extent). However, more than half of the organisations are not familiar with the issue of introducing managerial accountability in the institutions (6 organisations) as well as improving management mechanisms and capacities in relation to the institution's performance (the results of the institution's work are measured) (6 organisations). Four organisations each are not familiar with the issues of a) improving the capacity of public servants to improve the transparency of work (to open up data and create information about work); b) improving ethical standards and mechanisms to monitor the ethical behaviour of public servants; and c) strengthening the legal framework to improve accountability and transparency in the work of public administration bodies. Three organisations are not aware of the amendments made to the Law on Free Access to Information (see chart below).

One organisation believes that the situation regarding the transparency and accountability of institutions has largely improved compared to 2021, while two organisations believe that it has improved somewhat. On the other hand, four organisations believe that there are no particular changes, while another four organisations believe that the situation has worsened.

Civil society organisations do not believe that significant reform progress has been made in any area (see chart below). One organisation each considers that solid progress has been made in the areas of a) satisfaction with public services provided, b) efficiency and professionalism of public administration; c) information related to PAR and g) co-ordination mechanisms for public administration reform. However, seven organisations believe that there has been no progress in attracting, recruiting and retaining competent, efficient and motivated public administration staff, while five organisations believe that there has been no progress in co-ordination mechanisms. Four organisations see no progress in terms of the efficiency and professionalism of public administration.

Most civil society organisations (7 organisations) consider that the main challenges regarding the sustainability of the initiated/established changes in the public administration system are related to the insufficient involvement of civil society (citizens, civil society organisations, media, academia, etc.) in the planning and reporting processes for regulations and public policy documents Six organisations believe that the lack of external communication about changes, rights and obligations and the importance of reform activities is a challenge. Five organisations each believe that the challenges are related to a) lack of institutional capacity and human resources, b) frequent elections and changes, v) lack of institutional monitoring and control of the implementation of planned PAR measures and g) lack of internal communication within and between institutions (see graph below).

On the other hand, the organisations believe that active civil society and the accession process to the European Union are the driving forces. Many organisations highlighted the significance of political vision and human capacity as elements for driving reform (please see the graph below). One organisation, under the category “other” specified that the driving force is *“expertise, active engagement of employees based on expertise, knowledge, and determination.”*

one organisation also noted that it was necessary to *“insist on continuity and predictability, i.e. plan the process of monitoring the implementation of the AP”*, while another organisation noted that the reform was “just an expensive dead letter on paper”.

## Annex 11. List of consulted institutions

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| --- | --- |
| No. | Name of institution/organisation |
| 1 | Ombudsman |
| 2 | General Secretariat of the Government of the Republic of Serbia (GENSEC) |
| 3 | Centre for European Policy - Focus group 1 |
| 4 | Centre for Research in Politics Argument- Focus group 1 |
| 5 | Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia (PPS) |
| 6 | Ministry of the Interior (MoI) |
| 7 | Agency for Prevention of Corruption (APC) |
| 8 | MPALG (Sector for registers and local self-government) |
| 9 | ТА Visibility Project |
| 10 | Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) – Focus group 2 |
| 11 | Centre for European Policy - Focus group 2 |
| 12 | MPALSG (Sector for human resource management) |
| 13 | MPALSG (Sector for European integration and international cooperation) |
| 14 | MPALSG (Sector for professional development) |
| 15 | Republic Geodetic Authority (RGA) |
| 16 | Service for Human Resource Management (HRMS) |
| 17 | EU Delegation to the Republic of Serbia |
| 18 | OECD SIGMA |
| 19 | Ministry of Finance - Department - Central Harmonisation Unit (MoF CHU) |
| 20 | Office of the Prime Minister |
| 21 | Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection (CIPIPPD) |
| 22 | National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) |
| 23 | Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue - Sector for cooperation with civil societies |
| 24 | Regional School for Public Administration (ReSPA) |
| 25 | Office for IT and e-Government (ITE) |

## Annex 12. Data collection tools

**Interviews with key interlocutors - guidelines for interviews with the MPALSG representatives**

The MPALSG is currently conducting a mid-term review and evaluation of the impact of the Action Plan (2021-2025) for the implementation of the Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia (2021-2030), to this end, the outputs of the reform to date in the areas of human resources management, services, accountability and transparency are being reviewed. This analysis will shed light on how to further address possible difficulties at the system level in order to accelerate the ongoing reform implementation and/or revise the mechanisms to support change.

Please take part in this Analysis as you will be able to contribute a relevant and valuable perspective on the functioning of reform interventions in public administration. If you choose to participate, members of our team will talk with you for about 1 hour.

**Participation on a voluntary basis:** This analysis is designed to help improve public administration reform measures by learning from the perspective of all stakeholders involved. Your participation in the interview is voluntary. You can cancel the interview after it has started for any reason without any consequences.

**Confidentiality:** In the reports of this and other meetings, the views and opinions of the participants are collected and summarised without attributing them to specific individuals and without naming names at any point. Each report on this research is presented in such a way that it is difficult to identify the individuals involved in the analysis.

If you have any questions, now or in the future, you can contact \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing to participate in this discussion? (Only verbal response required)

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of surveyor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **Questions and subquestions** | **Questions for discussion[[252]](#footnote-253)** |
| 0. **GENERAL PART** Questions | |
| 0.1 Role | 1. What is your current position and to what extent were you familiar and/or connected with the reform measures contained in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? |
| 0.2 Strengths and weaknesses | 1. To what extent do the objectives defined by the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 correspond to existing priority needs and capacities? 2. To what extent are the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 demonstrably relevant to these needs? 3. In your opinion, what are the particularly good aspects of the reform measures included in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 in the areas covered by this Analysis [area of services; human resource management; and the area of transparency and accountability] that you are following/participating in? 4. In your opinion, what are the particularly bad aspects of the reform measures you are following/participating in? |
| **EFFICIENCY** | |
| To what extent have the reforms contributed to strengthening the public administration system? | [NOTE FOR SURVEYOR: focus on the area the interviewee is following/participating in]   1. What are the main **outputs** achieved by the reform measures of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 in the areas covered by this analysis [area of services; human resource management; and the area of transparency and accountability]? 2. To what extent and whether the PAR measures have contributed to changes in the following areas:  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Services**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Establishment of a system for the development, implementation and control of services | **Transparency and responsibilities**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Public administration has a higher level of accountability at all levels of government * Transparent publication of data held by the public administration for end users | **HRM**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Higher quality management of human resources * Better quality and more efficient work of employees in the administration | **Communication and co-ordination**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Established co-ordination and communication mechanism |  1. What’s missing? |
| 1. What were the **driving factors** behind the implementation of the par reform measures? |
| To what extent were **the PAR measures implemented on time?** | 1. Was there a delay in the implementation of the objectives defined by PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? 2. What were the **factors that slowed down** implementation? 3. Have measures been taken to minimise further delays? |
| To what extent have **the PAR measures led to the desired outputs?** | 1. To what extent has the PAR contributed to the following outputs:    * + End users are satisfied with the public services provided      + The public administration fulfils its tasks more transparently and responsibly      + State administration and LSGs attract, hire and retain competent, efficient and motivated staff      + Citizens are better informed about PAR      + More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of the PAR   Can you give any example?   1. What’s missing? 2. What challenges have you encountered in measuring the impact of the PAR? |
| 1. What are the most important changes when it comes to the overall efficiency of the public administration system ***to create and ensure the quality of services for citizens and businesses in line with the European principles of public administration?*** Can you give any example? 2. What’s missing? 3. What challenges have you encountered in measuring the efficiency of the public administration system? 4. Do you think that a functioning monitoring and evaluation system for PAR has been established? 5. To what extent do you think you are involved in the PAR? |
| Which key partners or stakeholders that have influenced the public administration reform can influence the further implementation of the reform? | 1. Who are the main stakeholders of the reform? How does the interaction and co-ordination of the stakeholders involved in the public administration reform take place? What is still missing? 2. What are examples of successful synergies? What are the challenges? 3. How do you assess the current management of the implementation of PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? 4. How do you assess the adequacy of capacities for co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of PARS AP? 5. How do you assess the adequacy of the communication capacities and the visibility of the results of PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? |

**Interviews with key interlocutors - Guidelines for interviews with administration bodies**

The MPALSG is currently conducting a mid-term review and evaluation of the impact of the Action Plan (2021-2025) for the implementation of the Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia (2021-2030), to this end, the outputs of the reform to date in the areas of human resources management, services, accountability and transparency are being reviewed. This analysis will shed light on how to further address possible difficulties at the system level in order to accelerate the ongoing reform implementation and/or revise the mechanisms to support change.

Please take part in this Analysis as you will be able to contribute a relevant and valuable perspective on the functioning of reform interventions in public administration. If you choose to participate, members of our team will talk with you for about 1 hour.

**Participation on a voluntary basis:** This analysis is designed to help improve public administration reform measures by learning from the perspective of all stakeholders involved. Your participation in the interview is voluntary. You can cancel the interview after it has started for any reason without any consequences.

**Confidentiality:** In the reports of this and other meetings, the views and opinions of the participants are collected and summarised without attributing them to specific individuals and without naming names at any point. Each report on this research is presented in such a way that it is difficult to identify the individuals involved in the analysis.

If you have any questions, now or in the future, you can contact \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing to participate in this discussion? (Only verbal response required)

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of surveyor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **Questions and subquestions** | **Questions for discussion[[253]](#footnote-254)** |
| 0. **GENERAL PART** Questions | |
| 0.1 Role | 1. What is your current position and to what extent were you familiar and/or connected with the reform measures contained in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? |
| 0.2 Strengths and weaknesses | 1. To what extent do the objectives defined by the PARS AP correspond to existing priority needs and capacities? 2. To what extent are the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 demonstrably relevant to these needs? 3. In your opinion, what are the particularly good aspects of the reform measures included in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 in the areas covered by this Analysis [area of services; human resource management; and the area of transparency and accountability] that you are following/participating in? 4. In your opinion, what are the particularly bad aspects of the reform measures you are following/participating in? |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **EFFICIENCY** | |
| To what extent have the reforms contributed to strengthening the public administration system? | [NOTE FOR SURVEYOR: focus on the area the interviewee is following/participating in]   1. What are the main **outputs** achieved by the reform measures of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 in the areas covered by this Analysis [area of services; human resource management; and the area of transparency and accountability]? 2. To what extent and whether the PARS measures have contributed to changes in the following areas:  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Services**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Establishment of a system for the development, implementation and control of services | **Transparency and responsibilities**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Public administration has a higher level of accountability at all levels of government * Transparent publication of data held by the public administration for end users | **HRM**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Higher quality management of human resources * Better quality and more efficient work of employees in the administration | **Communication and co-ordination**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Established co-ordination and communication mechanism |  1. What’s missing? |
| 1. What were the **driving factors** behind the implementation of the PAR reform measures? |
| To what extent were **the PAR measures implemented on time?** | 1. Was there a delay in the implementation of the objectives defined by PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? 2. What were the **factors that slowed down** implementation? 3. Have measures been taken to minimise further delays? |
| To what extent have **the PAR measures led to the desired outputs**? | 1. To what extent has the PAR contributed to the following outputs:    * + End users are satisfied with the public services provided      + The public administration fulfils its tasks more transparently and responsibly      + State administration and LSGs attract, hire and retain competent, efficient and motivated staff      + Citizens are better informed about PAR      + More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of PAR   Can you give any example?   1. What’s missing? 2. What challenges have you encountered in measuring the impact of PARS? |
| 1. What are the most important changes when it comes to the overall efficiency of the public administration system ***to create and ensure the quality of services for citizens and businesses in line with the European principles of public administration?*** Can you give any example? 2. What’s missing? 3. What challenges have you encountered in measuring the efficiency of the public administration system? 4. Do you think that a functioning monitoring and evaluation system for PARS has been established? 5. To what extent do you think you are involved in PARS? |
| Which key partners or stakeholders that have influenced the public administration reform can influence the further implementation of the reform? | 1. Who are the main stakeholders of the reform? How does the interaction and co-ordination of the stakeholders involved in the public administration reform take place? What is still missing? 2. What are examples of successful synergies? What are the challenges? 3. How do you assess the current management of the implementation of PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? 4. How do you assess the adequacy of capacities for co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of PARS AP? 5. How do you assess the adequacy of the communication capacities and the visibility of the results of PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? |

**Interviews with key interlocutors - Guidelines for interviews with key development partners**

The MPALSG is currently conducting a mid-term review and evaluation of the impact of the Action Plan (2021-2025) for the implementation of the Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia (2021-2030), to this end, the outputs of the reform to date in the areas of human resources management, services, accountability and transparency are being reviewed. This analysis will shed light on how to further address possible difficulties at the system level in order to accelerate the ongoing reform implementation and/or revise the mechanisms to support change.

Please take part in this Analysis as you will be able to contribute a relevant and valuable perspective on the functioning of reform interventions in public administration. If you choose to participate, members of our team will talk with you for about 1 hour.

**Participation on a voluntary basis:** This analysis is designed to help improve public administration reform measures by learning from the perspective of all stakeholders involved. Your participation in the interview is voluntary. You can cancel the interview after it has started for any reason without any consequences.

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If you have any questions, now or in the future, you can contact \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing to participate in this discussion? (Only verbal response required)

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of surveyor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **Questions and subquestions** | **Questions for discussion[[254]](#footnote-255)** |
| 0. **GENERAL PART** Questions | |
| 0.1 Role | 1. What is your current position and to what extent were you familiar and/or connected with the reform measures contained in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? |
| 0.2 Strengths and weaknesses | 1. To what extent do the objectives defined by the PARS AP correspond to existing priority needs and capacities? 2. To what extent are the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 demonstrably relevant to these needs? 3. In your opinion, what are the particularly good aspects of the reform measures included in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 in the areas covered by this Analysis [area of services; human resource management; and the area of transparency and accountability] that you are following/participating in? 4. In your opinion, what are the particularly bad aspects of the reform measures you are following/participating in? |
| **EFFICIENCY** | |
| To what extent have the reforms contributed to strengthening the public administration system? | [NOTE FOR SURVEYOR: focus on the area the interviewee is following/participating in]   1. What are the main outputs achieved by the reform measures of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 in the areas covered by this analysis [area of services; human resource management; and the area of transparency and accountability]? 2. To what extent and whether the PARS measures have contributed to changes in the following areas:  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Services**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Establishment of a system for the development, implementation and control of services | **Transparency and responsibilities**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Public administration has a higher level of accountability at all levels of government * Transparent publication of data held by the public administration for end users | **HRM**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Higher quality management of human resources * Better quality and more efficient work of employees in the administration | **Communication and co-ordination**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Established co-ordination and communication mechanism |  1. What’s missing? |
| 1. What were the **driving factors** behind the implementation of the PAR reform measures? |
| To what extent were **the PAR measures implemented on time?** | 1. Was there a delay in the implementation of the objectives defined by PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? 2. What were the **factors that slowed down** implementation? 3. Have measures been taken to minimise further delays? |
| To what extent have **the PAR measures led to the desired outputs**? | 1. To what extent has the PAR contributed to the following outputs:    * + End users are satisfied with the public services provided      + The public administration fulfils its tasks more transparently and responsibly      + State administration and LSGs attract, hire and retain competent, efficient and motivated staff      + Citizens are better informed about PAR      + More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of PAR   Can you give any example?   1. What’s missing? 2. What challenges have you encountered in measuring the impact of PARS? |
| 1. What are the most important changes when it comes to the overall efficiency of the public administration system ***to create and ensure the quality of services for citizens and businesses in line with the European principles of public administration?*** Can you give any example? 2. What’s missing? 3. What challenges have you encountered in measuring the efficiency of the public administration system? 4. Do you think that a functioning monitoring and evaluation system for PARS has been established? 5. To what extent do you think you are involved in PARS? |
| Which key partners or stakeholders that have influenced the public administration reform can influence the further implementation of the reform? | 1. Who are the main stakeholders of the reform? How does the interaction and co-ordination of the stakeholders involved in the public administration reform take place? What is still missing? 2. What are examples of successful synergies? What are the challenges? 3. How do you assess the current management of the implementation of PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? 4. How do you assess the adequacy of capacities for co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of PARS AP? 5. How do you assess the adequacy of the communication capacities and the visibility of the results of PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? |

**Interviews with key interlocutors - Guidelines for interviews with civil society organisations**

The MPALSG is currently conducting a mid-term review and evaluation of the impact of the Action Plan (2021-2025) for the implementation of the Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia (2021-2030), to this end, the outputs of the reform to date in the areas of human resources management, services, accountability and transparency are being reviewed. This analysis will shed light on how to further address possible difficulties at the system level in order to accelerate the ongoing reform implementation and/or revise the mechanisms to support change.

Please take part in this Analysis as you will be able to contribute a relevant and valuable perspective on the functioning of reform interventions in public administration. If you choose to participate, members of our team will talk with you for about 1 hour.

**Participation on a voluntary basis**: This analysis is designed to help improve public administration reform measures by learning from the perspective of all stakeholders involved. Your participation in the interview is voluntary. You can cancel the interview after it has started for any reason without any consequences.

**Confidentiality:** In the reports of this and other meetings, the views and opinions of the participants are collected and summarised without attributing them to specific individuals and without naming names at any point. Each report on this research is presented in such a way that it is difficult to identify the individuals involved in the analysis.

If you have any questions, now or in the future, you can contact \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing to participate in this discussion? (Only verbal response required)

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of surveyor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| --- | --- |
| **Questions and subquestions** | **Questions for discussion[[255]](#footnote-256)** |
| 0. **GENERAL PART** Questions | |
| 0.1 Role | 1. What is your current position and to what extent were you familiar and/or connected with the reform measures contained in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? |
| 0.2 Strengths and weaknesses | 1. To what extent do the objectives defined by the PARS AP correspond to existing priority needs and capacities? 2. To what extent are the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 demonstrably relevant to these needs? 3. In your opinion, what are the particularly good aspects of the reform measures included in the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 in the areas covered by this Analysis [area of services; human resource management; and the area of transparency and accountability] that you are following/participating in? 4. In your opinion, what are the particularly bad aspects of the reform measures you are following/participating in? |
| **EFFICIENCY** | |
| To what extent have the reforms contributed to strengthening the public administration system? | [NOTE FOR SURVEYOR: focus on the area the interviewee is following/participating in]   1. What are the main **outputs** achieved by the reform measures of the PARS AP for the period 2021-2025 in the areas covered by this analysis [area of services; human resource management; and the area of transparency and accountability]? 2. To what extent and whether the PARS measures have contributed to changes in the following areas:  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Services**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Establishment of a system for the development, implementation and control of services | **Transparency and responsibilities**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Public administration has a higher level of accountability at all levels of government * Transparent publication of data held by the public administration for end users | **HRM**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Higher quality management of human resources * Better quality and more efficient work of employees in the administration | **Communication and co-ordination**  Successful implementation of key activities in the area of services  Fulfilment of results in relation to:   * Established co-ordination and communication mechanism |  1. What’s missing? |
| 1. What were the **driving factors** behind the implementation of the par reform measures? |
| To what extent were **the PAR measures implemented on time?** | 1. Was there a delay in the implementation of the objectives defined by PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? 2. What were the **factors that slowed down** implementation? 3. Have measures been taken to minimise further delays? |
| To what extent have **the PAR measures led to the desired outputs?** | 1. To what extent has the PAR contributed to the following outputs:    * + End users are satisfied with the public services provided      + The public administration fulfils its tasks more transparently and responsibly      + State administration and LSGs attract, hire and retain competent, efficient and motivated staff      + Citizens are better informed about PAR      + More efficient and inclusive planning and implementation of PAR   Can you give any example?   1. What’s missing? 2. What challenges have you encountered in measuring the impact of PARS? |
| 1. What are the most important changes when it comes to the overall efficiency of the public administration system ***to create and ensure the quality of services for citizens and businesses in line with the European principles of public administration?*** Can you give any example? 2. What’s missing? 3. What challenges have you encountered in measuring the efficiency of the public administration system? 4. Do you think that a functioning monitoring and evaluation system for PARS has been established? 5. To what extent do you think you are involved in PARS? |
| Which key partners or stakeholders that have influenced the public administration reform can influence the further implementation of the reform? | 1. Who are the main stakeholders of the reform? How does the interaction and co-ordination of the stakeholders involved in the public administration reform take place? What is still missing? 2. What are examples of successful synergies? What are the challenges? 3. How do you assess the current management of the implementation of PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? 4. How do you assess the adequacy of capacities for co-ordinating and monitoring the implementation of PARS AP? 5. How do you assess the adequacy of the communication capacities and the visibility of the results of PARS AP for the period 2021-2025? |

Annex 13. **Survey for administrative bodies**

Dear Sir/Madam,

This research is conducted as part of the mid-term review and evaluation of the implementation of the Action Plan for the period 2021-2023 for the implementation of the Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030.

The analysis **assesses the outputs of the implementation of the above-mentioned Action Plan in the period from January 2021 to June 2023**, as well as the contribution of the stakeholders involved (administrative bodies, donors, civil society organisations, etc.) to achieving the results achieved. The study analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the different elements of the reform and looks for ways to overcome any difficulties at system level in order to accelerate the ongoing implementation of the reform and/or revise the mechanisms to support the changes.

As part of the Analysis, the aim of this survey is to gather opinions and experiences from the administrative bodies on the approach, key outputs and challenges, and driving forces. The research will be able to gather views and reflections on the outputs achieved by the reform in the three areas covered by the Action Plan: human resource management, services, and accountability and transparency of public administration.

This survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is highly appreciated, it is on a voluntary basis and you can cancel at any time or answer only part of the questions. Data that can be used to determine the identity of the examiner will not be passed on to the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government or to third parties. Please note that the IP address will not be stored or tracked, so you are free to express your opinion.

Please complete the survey by XXX 2023 at the latest.

We greatly appreciate your feedback as it is crucial for our analysis.

On the last page of the survey, you will find a “Submit” button. By clicking on this button, you agree to participate in the survey and submit your answers.

For further information about the surveys or this analysis, please contact XXX at XXX.

Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation!

**General information (choose the most appropriate answer)**

Y-1. Type of administration body:

Ministry

Special organisation

Service of the Government

Other... (List the type of body)

**Q1. To what extent have the outputs in the following areas contributed to improving the functioning and capacity of your organisation?**

**Human Resources Management**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Output** | **Completely** | **To a great extent** | **To a certain extent** | **Not at all. \*Explain why.** | **I do not know/I am not familiar** |
| Improved staff planning process |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improved competency framework |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improved selection and induction process of new employees |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improved merit-based recruiting process |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improved career development process |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improved system for evaluating the work of civil servants |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improved capacity of organisational units for human resource management |  |  |  |  |  |
| Training and professional development |  |  |  |  |  |
| Internship in state administration bodies |  |  |  |  |  |

**Services**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Output** | **Completely** | **To a great extent** | **To a certain extent** | **Not at all. Explain why.** | **I do not know/I am not familiar** |
| Development of new and optimisation of existing services |  |  |  |  |  |
| Development of e-Services |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increased human and technical/technological capacities for the provision of services to end users |  |  |  |  |  |

**Accountability and transparency**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Output** | **Completely** | **To a great extent** | **To a certain extent** | **Not at all. Explain why.** | **I do not know/I am not familiar** |
| Introduction of managerial accountability in institutions |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improved mechanisms and increased capacity for management according to the institution's performance (the results of the institution's work are measured) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improved ethical standards and mechanisms for monitoring the ethical behaviour of public officials |  |  |  |  |  |
| Strengthen the capacity of administrators to promote transparency in its work *(to open up data and produce information about the work)* |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improved implementation and monitoring of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance through strengthened capacity of the Commissioner and other relevant authorities |  |  |  |  |  |

**П2. How do you assess the changes in your institutions in terms of human resource capacities when you compare 2021 and 2023?**

They have improved greatly

They have improved somewhat

There are no particular changes

The situation has worsened

I do not know/I am not familiar

**П3. What is the progress made vis-a-vis following outputs using your institution as an example?**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Output | Significant progress | Solid progress | Minor progress | No progress |
| End users are satisfied with the public services provided (*data on user satisfaction with the quality of services is available*) |  |  |  |  |
| The public administration fulfils its tasks more transparently and responsibly |  |  |  |  |
| State administration and LSGs attract, hire and retain competent, efficient and motivated staff |  |  |  |  |
| Public administration is more efficient and professional |  |  |  |  |
| Citizens are better informed about PAR |  |  |  |  |
| Co-ordination mechanism for public administration reform is functional |  |  |  |  |

**П3а. If the answer is “significant” or “solid”, please describe examples of good practice: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**П4. What are some of the main challenges with regard to the sustainability of the changes launched/implemented in the public administration system? (You can choose more than one answer):**

Financial challenged

Lack of institutional capacity and human resources

Frequent elections and changes

Lack of interns and new employees selected according to their competences

Lack of knowledge about the implementation of changes and reforms

Lack of vision and knowledge among managers

Lack of monitoring and control of the implementation of planned measures in the PAR

Insufficient involvement of civil society (citizens, civil society organisations, media outlets, academia, etc.) in the process of planning and reporting of public policy regulations and documents (without asking the users what the real challenges are on the ground)

Lack of internal communication within and between institutions

Lack of external communication about changes, rights and obligations and the importance of reform activities

Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**П5. In your opinion, which driving forces are important for achieving outputs in the field of public administration reform? (You can choose more than one answer):**

EU accession process

Economic stability

Political stability

Active civil society

Existence of political will and vision

Sufficient staff capacity for the volume and different types of work

Expertise of the management staff

Enabling working environment

Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your time!

**Survey for civil society organisation**

Dear sir/madam,

This research is conducted as part of the mid-term review and evaluation of the implementation of the Action Plan for the period 2021-2023 for the implementation of the Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030.

The analysis **assesses the outputs of the implementation of the above-mentioned Action Plan in the period from January 2021 to June 2023**, as well as the contribution of the stakeholders involved (administrative bodies, donors, civil society organisations, etc.) to achieving the results achieved. The study analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the different elements of the reform and looks for ways to overcome any difficulties at system level in order to accelerate the ongoing implementation of the reform and/or revise the mechanisms to support the changes.

As part of the Analysis, the aim of this survey is to gather opinions and experiences from civil society organisations on the overall approach, key outputs and challenges, and driving forces. The research will be able to gather views and reflections on the outputs achieved by the reform in the three areas covered by the Action Plan: human resource management, services, and accountability and transparency of public administration.

This survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is highly appreciated, it is on a voluntary basis and you can cancel at any time or answer only part of the questions. Data that can be used to determine the identity of the examiner will not be passed on to the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government or to third parties. Please note that the IP address will not be stored or tracked, so you are free to express your opinion.

Please complete the survey by XXX 2023 at the latest.

We greatly appreciate your feedback as it is crucial for our analysis.

On the last page of the survey, you will find a “Submit” button. By clicking on this button, you agree to participate in the survey and submit your answers.

For further information about the surveys or this analysis, please contact XXX at XXX.

Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation!

**Reform initiatives and support**

**П1. To what extent are you familiar with the specific activities carried out as part of the public administration reform in the period from 2021 to date?**

**Human Resource Management**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Completely** | **To a great extent** | **To a certain extent** | **I do not know/I am not familiar** |
| Improving the staff planning process in the state administration and local self-government |  |  |  |  |
| Improved competency framework |  |  |  |  |
| Improved selection and induction process of new employees |  |  |  |  |
| Improved merit-based recruiting process |  |  |  |  |
| Improved system for evaluating the work of civil servants |  |  |  |  |
| Improved capacity of organisational units for human resource management |  |  |  |  |
| Training and professional development |  |  |  |  |
| Internship in state administration bodies |  |  |  |  |
| Standardisation and improvement of the organisation of professional examinations within the state administration system |  |  |  |  |
| Establishment of cooperation with the high educational institution with a view of educating staff for public administration |  |  |  |  |
| Spreading awareness of the state administration as a desirable employer |  |  |  |  |

**Services**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Completely** | **To a great extent** | **To a certain extent** | **I do not know/I am not familiar** |
| Development of new and optimisation of existing services |  |  |  |  |
| Development of e-Services |  |  |  |  |
| Increased human and technical/technological capacities for the provision of services to end users |  |  |  |  |
| Establishment of administrative one-stop-shops in LSGs |  |  |  |  |
| Collecting data on user satisfaction with services |  |  |  |  |
| Improving the system for controlling and monitoring the quality of service provision |  |  |  |  |

**Accountability and transparency**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Completely** | **To a great extent** | **To a certain extent** | **I do not know/I am not familiar** |
| Preparation and adoption of national action plans in the framework of RS participation in the OGP |  |  |  |  |
| Introduction of managerial accountability in institutions |  |  |  |  |
| Improved mechanisms and increased capacity for management according to the institution's performance (the results of the institution's work are measured) |  |  |  |  |
| Improved ethical standards and mechanisms for monitoring the ethical behaviour of public officials |  |  |  |  |
| Strengthen the capacity of administrators to promote transparency in its work (to open up data and produce information about the work) |  |  |  |  |
| Improving the regulatory framework to enhance accountability and transparency in the activities of public administration entities |  |  |  |  |
| Improved implementation and monitoring of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance through strengthened capacity of the Commissioner and other relevant authorities and authorised persons |  |  |  |  |

**П2. How do you assess the changes in the provision of administrative services when you compare 2021 and 2023?**

They have improved greatly

They have improved somewhat

There are no particular changes

The situation has worsened

I do not know/I am not familiar

**П3. How do you assess the changes in the transparency and accountability of the institutions when you compare 2021 and 2023?**

They have improved greatly

They have improved somewhat

There are no particular changes

The situation has worsened

I do not know/I am not familiar

**П4. How do you assess the progress of the following outputs?**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Output** | **Significant** | **Solid** | **To a minor extent** | **No progress** |
| End users are satisfied with the public services provided |  |  |  |  |
| The public administration fulfils its tasks more transparently and responsibly |  |  |  |  |
| State administration and LSGs attract, hire and retain competent, efficient and motivated staff |  |  |  |  |
| Public administration is more efficient and professional |  |  |  |  |
| Citizens are better informed about PAR |  |  |  |  |
| Co-ordination mechanism for public administration reform is functional |  |  |  |  |

**П4а. If the answer is “significant” or “solid”, please describe examples of good practice: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**П5. What are some of the main challenges with regard to the sustainability of the changes launched/implemented in the public administration system? (You can choose more than one answer):**

Financial challenged

Insufficient involvement of civil society (citizens, civil society organisations, media outlets, academia, etc.) in the process of planning and reporting of public policy regulations and documents

Lack of institutional capacity and human resources

Frequent elections and changes

Lack of interns and new employees selected according to their competences

Lack of knowledge about the implementation of changes and reforms

Lack of vision and knowledge among managers

Lack of institutional monitoring and control of the implementation of planned measures in the PAR

Lack of internal communication within and between institutions

Lack of external communication about changes, rights and obligations and the importance of reform activities

Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**П6. In your opinion, which driving forces are important for achieving outputs in the field of public administration reform? (You can choose more than one answer):**

EU accession process

Economic stability

Political stability

Active civil society

Existence of political will and vision

Sufficient staff capacity for the volume and different types of work

Expertise of the management staff

Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your time!

## Annex 14. Literature

**Laws**

* Law on Public Administration
* Law on Planning System of the Republic of Serbia
* Law on Civil Servants
* Law on Budget System
* Law on Ministries
* Law on General Administrative Procedure
* Law on National Academy of Public Administration
* Law on Public Procurement
* Law on Public-Private Partnerships and Concessions
* Law on e-Government
* Law on electronic documents, electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions
* Law on e-Commerce
* Law on payment services
* Law on the seal of the state and other authorities

**By-laws and other enactments**

* Decree on the Determining Competence for the Work of Public Servants,
* Decree on the Principles of Internal Organisation and Job Classification in the Ministries, Special Organisations and Services of the Government
* Decree on Policy Management Methodology, Policy and Regulatory Impact Assessment, and Content of Individual Policy Documents
* Decree on the General Secretariat of the Government
* Decree on the Office Operation of State Administrative Bodies
* Decision on the Establishment of the Public Administration Reform Council
* Rulebook on the manner of consulting, obtaining, processing and transmitting, i.e. submission of data on facts kept in official registers in electronic form and necessary for decision-making in administrative proceedings
* Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of Serbia
* Decision on the establishment of the IMPG for professional affairs in co-ordination and monitoring the process of the implementation of the PAR Strategy for the period 2021-2025

**Planning documents**

* Public Administration Reform Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030
* Action Plan for the period from 2021-2025 for the implementation of the Public Administration Reform Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021-2030
* e-Government Development Programme of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2022 and the accompanying AP for its implementation

**Other documents**

* External evaluation of the Strategic for Public Administration Reform in Serbia
* Report on lessons learnt through evaluation
* Annual report on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Implementation of Public Administration Reform for the Period 2018-2020
* Three-year review - Implementation of the Action Plan for the Implementation of Public administration Reform for the period 2018-2020.
* Evaluation and monitoring of the Sector Reform Contract for the Reform of Public Administration and Public Finance Management, assessment of compliance - mission #3, 2020
* Evaluation and monitoring of the Sector Reform Contract for the Reform of Public Administration and Public Finance Management, assessment of compliance - mission #4, 2021
* Report on Serbia 2022, the European Commission
* Implementation of the law on general administrative procedure in the Western Balkans, SIGMA Paper no. League T. and A. Kmecl, 2021, OECD publishing, Paris.
* Public administration principles, OECD SIGMA
* Public administration principles, data portal, OECD SIGMA
* Monitoring report for Serbia, OECD SIGMA, 2021
* A Comparative Study of Service Delivery in the Western Balkans, Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA), 2018

1. Annual Report on the implementation of the AP PAR for 2022, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11681&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Public Administration Reform Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030 (“Official Gazette of the RS”, no. 42/21 and 9/22- decision), link to document: <https://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/PAR-Strategy-2030-eng-1.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Formative evaluation is the process of collecting and analysing feedback during the development or implementation of a programme, project or product. It identifies strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement, with the aim of making adjustments to improve the quality and effectiveness of the programme or product. (for more detail please refer to: <https://www.evalcommunity.com/career-center/formative-evaluation/#:~:text=Formative%20evaluation%20is%20a%20process,of%20the%20program%20or%20product>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. The principles of affirmative research underscored a positive approach and analysis of reform benefits to gather instances of best practices, draw lessons, and formulate conclusions and recommendations. This approach aligns with an emphasis on the practicality of analysis results and principles of participation and empowerment. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. The principles of affirmative research include a focus on a positive approach and analysing the benefits of reform to gather instances of good practice, lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations. This approach aligns with an emphasis on the practicality of analysis results and principles of participation and empowerment. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The World Bank's assessment of government effectiveness encompasses perceptions from diverse sources, assessing the quality of public services and administration, independence from political influence, the efficacy of policy planning and execution, and the government's credibility in upholding these policies: <https://www.govindicators.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/wgidataset.xlsx> и <https://www.govindicators.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Annual report on the implementation of the PR PAR Strategy for 2022 <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11681&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. For example, a training programme has been developed to meet the needs of trainees and people being trained for independent work within his/her profession, and training aimed at strengthening the capacity of human resources departments in government administrative bodies is ongoing within NAPA. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. See further details: Annex 3, Sectoral Analysis - Human Resource Management [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. For example: Analysing the application of the existing workforce planning framework in government agencies and developing recommendations for improvement, with a proposal for employing staff in priority work areas; creating a competency framework for staff in AP and LSG positions with a roadmap for integration into the HRM. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. For instance: Elaborate an analysis of the legal framework regulating the procedure and authorisation for appointment as an acting civil servant, as well as proposals for measures for promotion; elaborate guidelines to improve the laws on systematisation in the field of job descriptions and competences required for senior civil servants. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. The news are downloaded from the official website of the Student Career Fair in Public Administration, link: <https://strucnapraksa.mduls.gov.rs/> [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Evaluation and monitoring of the Sector reform contract for Public administration reform and public and public finance management; Compliance assessment; Compliance assessment /Mission 4, Request for tranche release 2020, Review Report, Draft)*,* pp.30-31, and the website of the Regional School of Public Administration – ReSPA, <https://www.respaweb.eu/118/pages/69/winners-2022> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. UN e-Government Survey 2020 - Digital Government in the Decade of Action for Sustainable Development, report, p. 264, link to the document: <https://desapublications.un.org/file/781/download> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. United Nations E-Government Survey 2022 – The Future of Digital Government, Report, pp. 72, 233, link to the document: <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2022> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. UN e-Government Survey 2020 - Digital Government in the Decade of Action for Sustainable Development, report, p. 257,

    link to the document: <https://desapublications.un.org/sites/default/files/publications/2022-09/Web%20version%20E-Government%202022.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/govtech/gtmi> [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. Annual report for the year 2022 for the e-Government development programme for the period 2020-2022, available at the link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11676&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. <https://www.ite.gov.rs/tekst/sr/2689/ebeba.php> [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. <https://www.tanjug.rs/srbija/politika/49586/aleksandar-martinovic-jedinstvena-upravna-mesta-ustedece-gradanima-novac-i-vreme/vest> [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. <https://rap.euprava.gov.rs/privreda/home> [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. <https://epapir.rsjp.gov.rs/усвојен-програм-за-поједностављење-а-2/> [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. <https://www.napa.gov.rs/tekst/45/onlajn-obuke.php> [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. <https://caf.mduls.gov.rs/> [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. The situation in the field of OSS for the provision of public services in Serbia; Consultative report for the future model of OSS in Serbia; European best practices in the field of public service standards for the improvement of service standards, mapping the development of quality standards for the provision of public services in Serbia (status, shortcomings and needs); Serbia's roadmap for improving public service standards; Study on the accessibility of public services; Guidelines for the development of a plan for the continuity of the provision of priority public administration services in crisis situations. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. OECD/ SIGMA Report for Serbia of 2021 link: <https://sigmaweb.org/publications/Monitoring-Report-2021-Serbia.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. Serbia 2021 Report, European Commission, Brussels, 2021, link: <https://www.mei.gov.rs/upload/documents/eu_dokumenta/godisnji_izvestaji_ek_o_napretku/izvestaj_ek_oktobar_21.PDF> [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. Serbia 2022 Report, European Commission, Brussels, 2022, link: **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. Annual Report of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection of 2022, link: [https://www.poverenik.rs/images/stories/dokumentacija-nova/izvestajiPoverenika/2022/Godi%C5%A1nji\_izve%C5%A1taj\_2022\_-\_16\_03\_2023\_LAT.pdf](https://www.poverenik.rs/images/stories/dokumentacija-nova/izvestajiPoverenika/2022/Godišnji_izveštaj_2022_-_16_03_2023_LAT.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. See further details: Annex 5, Sectoral Analysis - Accountability and Transparency [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. See further details: Annex 9, Analysis of the survey for public authorities and Annex 10, Analysis of the survey for civil society [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. Decision on the establishment of the Working Group on Managerial Accountability in the Public Administration (“Official Gazette of the RS”, No. 79/23), link: <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/odluka/2023/79/6>. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. Annual Report 2022 on the implementation of the PAR Strategy 2021-2030, MPALSG, page link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11681&type=doc>; Online platform for monitoring the PAR progress, link: <https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?tab=overall&sid=243561&depth=4>; High Civil Service Council, Analysis of the content of the Code of Conduct of civil servants and procedures for data collection and reporting. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. Pilot project for the appointment of ethics and integrity officers in a selected number of public administration bodies [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. See further details: Annex 9 of the Analysis of the survey for administrative bodies [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. See further details: Annex 9, Analysis of the survey for administrative bodies [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. See further details: Annex 10 of the Analysis of the survey for civil society [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance (“Official Gazette of the RS”, no. 120/04, 54/07, 104/09, 36/10, 105 /21), link to document: <https://www.pravnoinformacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2004/120/7/reg>. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. Law on the Ombudman of the Republic of Serbia („Official Gazette of the RS“, number 105/21), link to the document: <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2021/105/1/reg>. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. Online platform for monitoring PAR implementation, link: <https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?tab=indikator&depth=3&sid=243573>. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. Open Data Portal, link <https://data.gov.rs/sr/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
42. Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance (“Official Gazette of the RS”, no. 120/04, 54/07, 104/09, 36/10, 105 /21), link to document: <https://www.pravnoinformacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2004/120/7/reg>. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
43. See further details: Annex 10 of the Analysis of the survey for civil society [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
44. Public Administration Reform Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030 (“Official Gazette of the RS”, no. 42/21 and 9/22- decision), link: <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2021/42/1/reg>, p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
45. Report from focus group discussions, CeSID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2022: *"When it comes specifically to the reform, e-mail communication stands out as communication channels, as well as internal portals where employees can find out about all newspapers on a daily basis.”* [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
46. [https://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/Pravilnik-o-unutra%C5%A1njem-ure%C4%91enju-i-sistematizaciji-radnih-mesta-u-Ministarstvu-dr%C5%BEavne-uprave-i-lokalne-samouprave-pre%C4%8Di%C5%A1%C4%87en-tekst.pdf](https://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/Pravilnik-o-unutrašnjem-uređenju-i-sistematizaciji-radnih-mesta-u-Ministarstvu-državne-uprave-i-lokalne-samouprave-prečišćen-tekst.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
47. Law on Planning System (“Official Gazette of the RS”, number 30/18), link: <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2018/30/1/reg> [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
48. Decree on the Methodology for the Preparation of Mid-Term Plans (“Official Gazette of the RS”, number 8/19), link: <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/uredba/2019/8/8> [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
49. <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/dokumenta.html> and <https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?jnodeId=732&sid=242079&tab=overall&depth=3> [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
50. The Covid epidemic has been both a driving force (for service delivery) but also a barrier to achieving certain outputs (more on the Covid challenges in the PARS Annual Implementation Report for 2021, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11568&type=doc> ) [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
51. See further details: Annex 9, Analysis of the survey for administrative bodies [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
52. See further details: Annex 10 of the Analysis of the survey for civil society [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
53. See further details: Annex 10 of the Analysis of the survey for civil society [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
54. United Nations E-Government Survey 2022 – The Future of Digital Government, Report, p. 3, link to the document: <https://desapublications.un.org/sites/default/files/publications/2022-09/Web%20version%20E-Government%202022.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
55. Annual Report on the implementation of the PAR Strategy for 2020, link to the documents: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11484&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
56. <https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?depth=1&jnodeId=732&tab=finansije&sid=242415> [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
57. Public Policy Secretariat. 2018. [Law on the Planning System](https://rsjp.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/Law-on-Planning-System.pdf). Belgrade. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
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60. MPALSG. 2020. [The Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia for the Period 2021−2030](http://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/PAR-Strategy-2030-eng-1.pdf). Belgrade. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
61. Further details on the OGP in Serbia can be obtained from https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
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63. Ministry of Finance. 2023. <https://www.mfin.gov.rs//upload/media/G8MXn2_63e625e554bd3.pdf>. Belgrade. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
64. Public Procurement Development Programme for the period 2019-2023, ("Official Gazette of the RS", number 82/19), link to the document: <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/drugiakt/2019/82/1> [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
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153. Online platform for monitoring PAR implementation, link: <https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?tab=indikator&depth=3&sid=243612>. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
154. Annual Work Report of the Ombudsman for 2020, 2021 and 2022, link: <https://www.ombudsman.rs/index.php/izvestaji/godisnji-izvestaji>. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
155. European Commission. [2022 Progress Report](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/serbia-report-2022_en) for Serbia, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
156. The sources are the Regulations on the internal organisation and job systematisation in MPALSG (from November 2020 to March 2023) with MPALSG statistics on the number of employees and vacancies. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
157. Four employees took part in general training courses on public affairs management, including a section on monitoring in 2021 [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
158. Two employees attended the training “Use JIS for planning, implementation monitoring, public policy coordination and reporting”, two employees attended the training on e-Consultations, two employees attended the training on IPA 3 [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
159. 2 employees underwent IPDET training on evaluation and two attended training on “Use of JIS for planning, implementation monitoring, public policy coordination and reporting”. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
160. Three employees took part in general training courses on public affairs management, including a section on monitoring. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
161. Three employees underwent the training “Use of JIS for planning, implementation monitoring, public policy coordination and reporting”. Two employees took part in the training course “Taxes and duties exemption in the decentralised system”. Three employees took part in the “Workflow analysis” training course. One employee took part in the training courses “Regional Conference on IPA 3” and “Regional Conference on Policy Coordination and Representation of the Network of Policy Coordinators in the Western Balkans”. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
162. Completion of 5 soft skills training modules aimed at improving donor coordination and communication of PAR outputs. The training for IPA - Green Agenda was held in Barcelona. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
163. Training in the area of personal skills (5 two-day modules) [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
164. Trainings on PFM Programme, one three-day training [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
165. Training in the area of personal skills [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
166. Digital communication trainings [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
167. Training in digital communication, organisation of digital events, social networks and advertising through them, media briefings, media analysis and press clipping, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
168. Indicator: *The number of public policy documents within the PAR whose monitoring results are available via OMT (number)*, annual reports on the implementation of the PAR Strategy, table views <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/dokumenta.html> : 2021 <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11471&type=doc> 2022 <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11617&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
169. In the course of 2021 two meetings of the PAR Council were held: 10 June 2021 and 23 December 2021, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/savet-za-reformu-javne-uprave.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
170. The first IMPGIMPG meeting was held on 8 October 2021, link*:* [*https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/medjuministarska-projektna-grupa/225127/prvi-sastanak-medjuministarske-projektne-grupe.html*](https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/medjuministarska-projektna-grupa/225127/prvi-sastanak-medjuministarske-projektne-grupe.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
171. The Annual report on the implementation of the AP PARS for 2022 <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11681&type=doc> , the following explanation was provided for the PAR Council's failure to convene: There was no meeting of the PAR Council in 2022 due to the general election. The decision on the appointment of new staff, after the election, was taken on 29 December 2022: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/upload/media/0/0/0/11594/Resenje%20o%20imenovanju%20clanova%20Saveta%20za%20RJU.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
172. three meetings were held in 2022, specifically 25 May, 2022, 23 December 2022, 27 December 2022, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/medjuministarska-projektna-grupa.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
173. 26 January 2023, link: https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/savet-za-reformu-javne-uprave/225142/odrzana-treca-sednica-saveta-za-reformu-javne-uprave.html [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
174. 31 August 2023, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/medjuministarska-projektna-grupa/225149/peti-sastanak-medjuministarske-projektne-grupe.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
175. Methodological Framework for the Principles of Public Administration, OECD/ SIGMA, May 2019, page 20, link: <https://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/Methodological-Framework-for-the-Principles-of-Public-Administration-May-2019.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
176. Decision on the establishment of the PAR Council (“Official Gazette of the RA”, number 56/21) of 4 June 2021, link: <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/odluka/2021/56/4> [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
177. Decision Minister of Public Administration and Local Government Number: 119-01-00125/2021-06, of 1 September 2021, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/medjuministarska-projektna-grupa.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
178. Seven representatives of the association are equal members of the IMPGIMPG, not only in the head office in Belgrade, but also in Niš, Subotica and Prijepolje: Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, National Coalition for Decentralisation - Niš, European Policy Centre, Belgrade Open School, Centre for Local Democracy - Subotica, Argument - Prijepolje, Association of Citizens for Democracy and Civic Education “Civic Initiatives” - Belgrade. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
179. Ombudsman, Agency for Prevention of Corruption, Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
180. <https://www.par-monitor.org/about-weber/> [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
181. Law on Planning System (“Official Gazette of the RS”, number 30/18), link: <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2018/30/1/reg> [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
182. Decree on the Methodology for the Preparation of Mid-Term Plans (“Official Gazette of the RS”, number 8/19), link: <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/uredba/2019/8/8> [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
183. <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/dokumenta.html> и <https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?jnodeId=732&sid=242079&tab=overall&depth=3> [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
184. Decision Minister of Public Administration and Local Government Number: 119-01-244/21-05 of 1 February 2022, and the Decision on Amending the Decision, number: 119-01-244/21-05 of 17 February 2022 [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
185. Decision by the Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government Number: 119- 01-244/2016-01 of 7 March 2023 [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
186. The first meeting of the Special working group for planning and communication coordination focusing on public administration reform was held on 22 February 2022. In 2023, the first meeting was held on 11 April 2023, link: <https://mduls.gov.rs/sektori/eu-integracije/saradnjom-ka-boljem-informisanju-javnosti-o-rezultatima-reforme-javne-uprave/> , the second on 29 May 2023, and the third on 31 July 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
187. The minutes from the second meeting of the Special working group for planning and communication coordination focusing on public administration reform held on 29 May 2023 [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
188. Electronic correspondence among the members of the working group and publication of visual material on social networks in July 2023 MPALSG; NAPA; Office for ITE; RGA: The Ministry of Education, etc. for the campaign - THE CITIZENS HAVE NOT BEEN COURIERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION FOR SIX YEARS, which marks six years of continuous progress on the institution's service highway (e-ZUP, which started operating in June 2017). <https://www.facebook.com/KancelarijaITE/> and <https://www.instagram.com/prosveta.gov.rs/> and <https://www.instagram.com/republicki_geodetski_zavod/> and <https://www.instagram.com/napa.srbija/> and <https://www.instagram.com/mupsrbije/> [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
189. Strategic Communication Framework-PAR, MPALSG and EU Project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, 2109: <https://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/Strateski-komunikacioni-okvir-RJU-sr.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
190. Annual report on the PARS implementation for 2021, agendas and minutes of the meetings of the special working group on planning and coordination of communication in the context of public administration reform. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
191. <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/dokumenta.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
192. Reports on public opinion polls - the attitude of Serbian citizens towards PAR, CESID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2022, December 2021, December 2022 [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
193. The training sessions cover: Public speaking, Communication in social networks, Crisis communication, Communicator, Public administration - efficient service for citizens and business, Online LMS platform for NAPA, Link: <https://www.napa.gov.rs/tekst/45/onlajn-obuke.php> [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
194. Annual Report on the implementation of the AP PAR for 2022: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11681&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
195. NAPA records on 3 August 2023 [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
196. Annual Report on the Implementation of the PAR Strategy for 2020, MPALSG, page 60, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11484&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
197. Annual Report on the Implementation of the PAR Strategy for 2021, MPALSG, page 69, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11568&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
198. <https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?depth=4&jnodeId=732&tab=overall&sid=243933> [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
199. <https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?depth=4&jnodeId=732&tab=overall&sid=244149> [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
200. PAR Communication in Serbia and attitude towards PAR: Civil servants and citizens of Serbia, report from focus group discussions, CeSID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2022, December 2021, December 2022 [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
201. Amendments to the Law on the Seal of the State and Other Authorities of May 2021 (“Official Gazette of the RS”, no. 101/07, 49/21), link: https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2007/101/6 [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
202. Annual [Report 2021 on the Implementation of the PAR Strategy for 2021,](https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11568&type=doc) MPALSG, page 15, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11568&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
203. Narrative of the Annual report on the implementation of the e-Government Development Programme for the period 2020-2022 of 2022, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11676&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
204. Summary Report from focus group discussions, CeSID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2020: *"The discussions in the focus groups show that civil servants do not have an enviable level of knowledge about public administration reform, which is also confirmed by the average rating of information about public administration (3.6). Among those who were able to indicate what the public administration reform is, there are also those who associate the reform (as well as citizens) with the digitalisation and networking of institutions and the service that serves citizens in the exercise of their rights. When it comes to individual areas of public administration reform, it has been shown that civil servants are not familiar with all individual areas and that there is room for additional information for public administration employees.*

     They admit that, due to the nature of their work, they only follow and know what happens in the institutions where they are employed. Moreover, civil servants show a higher level of knowledge and awareness of both the reform itself and its promoters than the employees of the local administration units. Apart from admitting that they are not sufficiently informed about the reform that goes beyond their area of work, they say that they learn about other reforms mainly through the means of mass communication, i.e. television, and when they need to use public administration services, they consult their colleagues or search the Internet for additional information.” [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
205. Summary Report from focus group discussions, CeSID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2020: *"The average score for internal communication is 3.6.” Internal communication is most frequently carried out through official channels (e-mail and post), while e-mail and verbal communication by telephone are used as communication channels for internal communication about the reform. A certain regularity was also observed that horizontal communication is more likely to take place by telephone than vertical communication by e-mail. Civil servants attribute the problems with internal communication primarily to the human factor, but also to the avoidance of taking responsibility and the lack of an institutional memory system."* [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
206. Summary Report from focus group discussions, CeSID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2021: *"Civil servants generally share the view that any of the reforms under discussion would have a positive impact on the functioning of the system.” However, they are sceptical when it comes to the introduction of all these reforms, especially when it comes to the reform of the salary system. They admit that, due to the nature of their work, they only follow and know what happens in the institutions where they are employed. There is a clear difference between the level of information and knowledge of employees in a state institution compared to employees in local government units. Apart from admitting that they are not sufficiently informed about the reform that goes beyond their area of work, they say that they learn about other reforms mainly through the means of mass communication, i.e. television, and when they need to use public administration services, they consult their colleagues or search the Internet for additional information.” Civil servants cite digitalisation as a positive side of the public administration reform in Serbia."* [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
207. The information was received later by email from CeSID, as the narrative part of the report on the focus group discussion does not contain any information [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
208. The information was received later by email from CeSID, as the narrative part of the report on the focus group discussion does not contain any information [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
209. Report from focus group discussions, CeSID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2022: *"When it comes specifically to the reform, e-mail communication stands out as communication channels, as well as internal portals where employees can find out about all newspapers on a daily basis.”* [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
210. Summary Report from focus group discussions, CeSID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
211. Summary Report from focus group discussions, CeSID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
212. News about the launch of the HR network on 3 March 2021, link: <https://www.suk.gov.rs/vest/984/hr-mreza-zapocela-je-sa-radom.php> and the news on the last meeting within the observed evaluation period of the the same network <https://www.suk.gov.rs/vest/2304/odrzan-deveti-sastanak-hr-mreze.php> [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
213. Strategic PAR Communication Framework, MPALSG and EU Project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, 2109: <https://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/Strateski-komunikacioni-okvir-RJU-sr.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
214. Guidelines for Communicating PAR, 2021, link: <https://rju.gov.rs/o-reformi-javne-uprave/komunikacija-reforme-javne-uprave/smernice-za-komuniciranje-reforme-javne-uprave/> and <http://rju.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Smernice_za_komuniciranje_javne_uprave-07-09-21.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
215. Guidelines for the use of social networks for public administration bodies and institutions, 2021, link: <https://rju.gov.rs/o-reformi-javne-uprave/komunikacija-reforme-javne-uprave/smernice-za-koriscenje-drustvenih-mreza-za-organe-i-institucije-javne-uprave/> and <http://rju.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/smernice-za-koriscenje-drustvenih-mreza.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
216. Source: Annual Report on the Implementation of the PAR for 2021, table overview, link: <https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?depth=4&jnodeId=732&tab=overall&sid=243984> and <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11471&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
217. Annual reports on the implementation of the operational plans for the PAR communication for 2021 and 2022 and the data entered via the annual reports on the implementation PARS for 2021 and 2022, link: <https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?jnodeId=732&sid=243969&tab=overall&depth=3> [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
218. Annual Report on the Implementation of the PAR Strategy for 2022, table overview, link: https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?depth=4&jnodeId=732&tab=overall&sid=244143 [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
219. Annual Report on the implementation of the PAR for 2022, link: https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?depth=4&jnodeId=732&tab=overall&sid=244119 on the importance of “opening” data and examples of best practices in their use in the activities carried out during the reporting period as part of the Republic of Serbia's participation in the international Open Government Partnership Initiative. Accordingly, promoting the publication of data in a machine-readable format and presenting examples of best practices was one of the topics of the conference “Partnership - the key to better solutions”. It took place on 19 May 2022 in Belgrade as part of the Global Partnership Week for Open Government in the Republic of Serbia. The session “Open about open data” was dedicated to the aforementioned topic and was attended by representatives of the Office for IT and E-Government, the “Sigurne Staze” Association from Bor and the City of Novi Pazar. In the presence of over 120 representatives of state administration bodies, local self-government units and civil society, the following was presented: Open data portal [https://data.gov.rs/sr/,](https://data.gov.rs/sr/) examples of the use of open data in the field of local finance (e.g. the platform Budget of cities and municipalities <https://budzeti.data.gov.rs/>), examples of use in the field of urban mobility, transport and urban planning (the platform based on open data was created and presented by the “Sigurne staze” association from Bor, namely: <https://www.mobilitybor.com/,> <https://www.bicibor.rs/,> <https://www.ekobus.rs/,> <https://www.bor.sigurnestaze.com/>), as well as the experience of the City of Novi Pazar as one of the pioneers in “opening” data among local self-government units in the Republic of Serbia Link to the invitation and event Agenda: <https://mduls.gov.rs/obavestenja/javni-poziv-za-ucesce-na-dogadjajima-u-okviru-obelezavanja-nedelje-partnerstva-za-otvorenu-upravu-2022-godine/> Link to even news: [https://mduls.gov.rs/saopstenja/partnerstvo-kao-put-ka-otvorenoj-upravi/.](https://mduls.gov.rs/saopstenja/partnerstvo-kao-put-ka-otvorenoj-upravi/) In addition to the above, open data was the topic of the “Info-day on the Open Government Partnership” held on 20 December 2022, via the zoom platform, and as part of the start of work on the new Action Plan for the implementation of the OGP Initiative in Republic of Serbia. In the presence of over 70 participants, the Open Data Portal was presented, as one of the most significant results achieved by the implementation of the previous national Action Plans, but also some examples of good practice in the reuse of open data. Link to the invitation and event Agenda: <https://mduls.gov.rs/obavestenja/javni-poziv-za-ucesce-na-info-danu-o-partnerstvu-za-otvorenu-upravu/> Link to even news: <https://mduls.gov.rs/saopstenja/mduls-ostaje-posveceno-vrednostima-i-principima-otvorene-uprave/> In addition, MPALSG has on several occasions published the most important information in this area, such as news on Serbia's position on the list of competitiveness<https://mduls.gov.rs/saopstenja/republika-srbija-jedan-od-regionalnih-lidera-u-razvijenosti-drzave-u-oblasti-otvorenih-podataka/> [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
220. Link to the news for the 2023 media briefing: <https://mduls.gov.rs/sektori/eu-integracije/ka-boljem-komuniciranju-reforme-javne-uprave-odrzan-brifing-za-medije/> [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
221. Annual Report on the Implementation of the PAR Strategy for 2022, table overview, link: <https://srju-monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/statistike.html?depth=4&jnodeId=732&tab=overall&sid=244161> [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
222. <https://rju.gov.rs/o-reformi-javne-uprave/komunikacija-reforme-javne-uprave/kampanja-reforma-javne-uprave-je/> [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
223. <https://rju.gov.rs/o-reformi-javne-uprave/komunikacija-reforme-javne-uprave/kampanja-uprava-po-meri-svih-nas/> and <https://mduls.gov.rs/uprava-po-meri-svih-nas/video-i-infografici/> и <https://mduls.gov.rs/reforma-javne-uprave-u-srbiji/aktuelnosti/uz-podrsku-eu-pocela-kampanja-uprava-po-meri-svih-nas/> [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
224. Reports on public opinion polls - Attitude of Serbian citizens towards PAR, CESID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
225. Reports on public opinion polls - Attitude of Serbian citizens towards PAR, CESID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2021 [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
226. Reports on public opinion polls - Attitude of Serbian citizens towards PAR, CESID DOO and the EU project: “Support for visibility and communication of PAR in the context of the Sector Reform Contract for PAR”, December 2022. year [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
227. Chapter **9:** Management and coordination of PAR, Handbook for the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of public administration reform and sectoral strategies: Guide for SIGMA partners, OECD/ SIGMA, Paris 2018, Link: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/37e212e6-en.pdf?expires=1691048942&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=4900FF8569F9A4CFE470E49398E933BF [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
228. Decision on the establishment of the PAR Council (“Official Gazette of the RA”, number 56/21) of 4 June 2021, link: <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/odluka/2021/56/4> [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
229. Decision by the Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government Number: 119-01-00125/2021-06, of 1 September 2021, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/medjuministarska-projektna-grupa.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
230. Decision by the Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government Number: 119-01-244/21-05 of 1 February 2022, and the Decision on Amending the Decision, number: 119-01-244/21-05 of and the Decision Minister the Local Governments number: 119- 01-244/2016-01 of 7 March 2023 [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
231. In the course of 2021 two meetings of the PAR Council were held: 10 June 2021 and 23 December 2021, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/savet-za-reformu-javne-uprave.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
232. The first IMPG meeting was held on 8 October 2021, link*:* [*https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/medjuministarska-projektna-grupa/225127/prvi-sastanak-medjuministarske-projektne-grupe.html*](https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/medjuministarska-projektna-grupa/225127/prvi-sastanak-medjuministarske-projektne-grupe.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
233. The Annual report on the implementation of the AP PARS for 2022 <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11681&type=doc> , the following explanation was provided for the PAR Council's failure to convene: There was no meeting of the PAR Council in 2022 due to the general election. The decision on the appointment of new staff, after the election, was taken on 29 December 2022: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/upload/media/0/0/0/11594/Resenje%20o%20imenovanju%20clanova%20Saveta%20za%20RJU.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
234. Three meetings were held in 2022, specifically 25 May, 2022, 23 December 2022, 27 December 2022, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/medjuministarska-projektna-grupa.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
235. The first meeting of the Special working group for planning and communication coordination focusing on public administration reform was held on 22 February 2022. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
236. 26 January 2023, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/savet-za-reformu-javne-uprave/225142/odrzana-treca-sednica-saveta-za-reformu-javne-uprave.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
237. 31 August 2023, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/medjuministarska-projektna-grupa/225149/peti-sastanak-medjuministarske-projektne-grupe.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
238. In 2023, he first meeting of the Special working group for planning and communication coordination focusing on public administration reform was held on 11 April 2023, link: https://mduls.gov.rs/sektori/eu-integracije/saradnjom-ka-boljem-informisanju-javnosti-o-rezultatima-reforme-javne-uprave/г, on 29 May 2023, and the third on 31 July 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
239. European Commission. [2022 Progress Report](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/serbia-report-2022_en) for Serbia,, p. 16 [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
240. Monitoring Report for Serbia, OECD/ SIGMA, November 2021, page 25, link: <https://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/Monitoring-Report-2021-Serbia.pdf> : “The PAR Council, as the highest political-level co-ordination body, is established and functional. The administrative-level co-ordination structure has not been completed, however, and its functioning is irregular.” [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
241. Public Administration Reform Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030 ("Official Gazette of the RS no. 42/21 and 9/22), link: <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2021/42/1/reg>) [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
242. News about the IMPG meeting held in May 2022, link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/strukture/medjuministarska-projektna-grupa/225133/drugi-sastanak-medjuministarske-projektne-grupe.html> and Minutes from the meeting [https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/upload/media/0/0/0/11561/%D0%97%D0%B0%D0%BF%D0%B8%D1%81%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA%20%D1%81%D0%B0%20%D0%B4%D1%80%D1%83%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B3%20%D1%81%D0%B0%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%BA%D0%B0%20%D0%9C%D0%9F%D0%93.pdf](https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/upload/media/0/0/0/11561/Записник%20са%20другог%20састанка%20МПГ.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
243. Annual Report on the Implementation of the PAR Strategy for 2021, page 72, link: https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11568&type=doc [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
244. Annual Report for 2021 on the implementation of the PAR Strategy for the period 2021-2030, link to the document: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11725&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
245. Annual [Report 2021 on the Implementation of the PAR Strategy for 2021,](https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11568&type=doc) MPALSG, page Documents link: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11568&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
246. World Bank, <https://www.govindicators.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/wgidataset.xlsx> и <https://www.govindicators.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
247. Annual Report on the implementation of the PAR for 2022, link to the document: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11681&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
248. OECD/ SIGMA Report for Serbia of 2021, link the document: <https://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/Monitoring-Report-Executive-Summary-2021-Serbia.pdf> p. 6 [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
249. Prior to the optimisation of the strategic framework by the PARS, the Strategy for Professional Development of Civil Servants in the Republic of Serbia, the Strategy for Professional Development of Employees in LSGUs were being prepared, while part of the HRM was included in the previous PAR Strategy 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
250. Annual report for the year 2022 on the implementation of the AP PARS, link to the document: <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11681&type=doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
251. OECD/ SIGMA Report for Serbia of 2021, link to the document: <https://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/Monitoring-Report-Executive-Summary-2021-Serbia.pdf>, p. 19 [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
252. Not all questions can be asked in all conversations. Different parts will be prioritized by different actors. [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
253. Not all questions can be asked in all conversations. Different parts will be prioritized by different actors. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
254. Not all questions can be asked in all conversations. Different parts will be prioritized by different actors. [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
255. Not all questions can be asked in all conversations. Different parts will be prioritized by different actors. [↑](#footnote-ref-256)