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**Support to Public Administration Reform  
Visibility and Communication under the PAR  
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# **Situation Analysis Report**

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## List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
AP	Action Plan
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation in Belgrade
FGD	Focus group discussion
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
LGAP	Law on General Administrative Procedure
LSG	Local Self Government
MEI	Ministry for European Integration
MPALSG	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government
MoF	Ministry of Finance
NAPA	National Academy for Public Administration
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCSO	Office for Cooperation with Civil Society Organisations
OGP	Open Government Partnership
OGWG	Open Government Working Group
OIT	Office for Information Technologies and E-Government
OSS	One-stop-shop
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PFM	Public Finance Management
PIO	Public Information Officer
PPS	Public Policy Secretariat
PR	Public Relations
SA	Situation Analysis
SBS	Sector Budget Support
SRC	Sector Reform Contract
TA	Technical assistance
TAT	Technical assistance team
ToR	Terms of Reference
V&C	Visibility and communication

## 1. Summary

The Situation Analysis has been developed as the basis for defining an effective Communication Framework for pursuing visibility and communication about PAR and PFM reforms. It analysed the current communication environment and awareness raising efforts related to the overall PAR and PFM reforms (including the OGP), along with the effects of these efforts on citizens' awareness.

The SA (based on surveys, interviews, focus groups discussions, analysis, document research, etc.) yielded the findings summarised below, confirming the assumptions from the ToR and further emphasising the need for enhancing communication capacities of PAR involved institutions and streamlining the communication of reforms to the general public.

The findings demonstrate that internal communication needs to be improved and mechanisms for more efficient coordination between stakeholders identified, together with clear, well defined procedures for internal and external communication. The available financial resources for PAR communication need to be pooled together to produce synergetic effects.

The SA has established that all the mainstream communication channels are in place (events, traditional media, websites, social media). Along with the lack of strategic approach, there is a need for strengthened coordination between stakeholders and continual support in implementing communication activities. The key challenge to PAR and PFM visibility is the general perception that PAR is a never-ending process, lasting for years. Even the word "reform" has a negative connotation and there is a lot of distrust towards possibilities for change. Objectives, such as professionalisation, modernisation, depoliticisation and rationalisation are being constantly repeated.

Regarding awareness about PAR, 24% of respondents of Baseline Survey know what PAR is, 26% have never heard of the process, whilst 46% report being aware of the PAR concept but not knowing what it entails. The situation with awareness of PFM is similar - although it has been implemented for the past two years, only 20% of respondents were familiar with it, while 36% have not heard of it at all. Different part of the SA confirmed that the preferred communication channels of the public are television, websites and social media.

"Translating" PAR/PFM reforms and benefits to understandable and clear language, using practical examples and achievements to demonstrate actual progress is also among major challenges. Citizens do not need to know whether some novelties in their administration are the products of the PAR, however it is important that they are aware that these are part of the government efforts to create open, fair, user-friendly and custom-made public services for citizens and the economy.

Negative attitude to civil service as slow, bureaucratic and expensive, and public servants as insufficiently competent is still present, which is evident from the focus group discussions. Therefore, communication of PA reforms on all state levels needs to focus on the provision of new solutions bringing tangible benefits for the citizens and economy.

Insufficient recognition of EU support to PAR processes is also confirmed by the findings of situation analysis. The public is moderately aware of the significant funding provided. Although 15% of the polled respondents reported that the EU was Serbia's greatest donor, most respondents (19%) placed China, Germany (18%) and Russia (15%) at the top. The EU was seen as the key source of funding for PAR by 25%, while additional 23% believe Germany provided the most assistance. Therefore, ensuring that EU support is recognised and clearly linked to citizens' positive experiences is one more challenge for this project and all stakeholders involved in PAR/PFM communication.

The complexity of PAR/PFM processes brings a lot of communication challenges, which will be mitigated by focusing on: results and achievements instead on procedures and activities; further strengthening of capacity of stakeholders to communicate effectively; defining relevant messages that interest the target audience; providing national and local media with simplified information and making strong media partnerships.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Purpose of the Situation Analysis

The purpose of this Situation Analysis (SA) is to present the current situation in visibility and communication actions related to the overall Public Administration and Public Finance Management reform agendas (including the Open Government Partnership (OGP), as a basis for defining a sound and effective PAR Communication Framework.

To that end, the TAT, in close coordination and cooperation with the beneficiaries examined:

- the existing communication environment (capacities, processes, procedures)
- the existing communication and awareness raising efforts of the beneficiaries of this project and their media coverage,
- the outcomes/effects of such efforts (citizens and public servants awareness on PAR/PFM).

Based on the data and information regarding the current status of communication capacities, processes, tools used, achieved results and effects among the internal and external public, the SA provides findings and recommendations for enhancing communication about PAR and PFM, including the OGP initiative, as well as the EU support to Serbia in this regard. It also sets the basis for measuring effects and results of future communication and visibility activities.

### 2.2 Methodological approach

In order to perform a comprehensive analysis, the elements of empirical and analytical approaches, such as baseline survey, web analysis, social media analysis, media analysis and interpretative, holistic approach, such as focus groups, were employed. The SA development comprised two phases: data collection and analytical phase. Having in mind the complexity of the task and a comprehensive horizontal significance of PAR and PFM, the following types of research<sup>1</sup> were conducted:

#### Quantitative research

- Exploring current documents relevant for the visibility and communication of PAR and PFM;
- Monitoring and measuring current and previous visibility and communication actions and their effects;
- Exploring current communication processes for external and internal communication.

#### Qualitative analysis

- Content analysis of PAR communication so far: wording (positive/negative; simple and ample/administrative and not-understandable);
- Current and previous actions approach: proactive/reactive.

The approach in the analytical phase was descriptive and at the same time assessing the statistical relationship between the available data. The data collection periods were set in the document SA Framework, developed and agreed with the main beneficiaries. The description for each of the tools used (e.g. period for conducting/developing, key demographic indicators, procedures, geographical areas covered, types of documents examined) is provided in the SA framework, as well as in individual detailed reports, annexed to the present analysis.

The current communication environment was analysed, more specifically:

- Relevant PAR/PFM documents,
- Capacities (human, technical and financial),
- Stakeholders (communication within and between relevant institutions and organisations),
- Processes (tools, techniques and channels, including media, websites and social media),
- Public perception of PAR/PFM.

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<sup>1</sup> As set in the Annex 1 - Situation Analysis Framework

## Tools

In order to operationalise the types of research mentioned, the following tools/methods were used:

- Baseline survey (citizens)
- Questionnaires/ In depth interviews (civil servants)
- Focus groups (civil servants and LSG servants)
- Focus groups (citizens)
- Online survey (LSG servants)
- Analysis of the existence of tracking mechanisms
- Stakeholders workshop/developing SWOT analysis
- Desk research/ documents review

For the particular quantitative tools/methods, specific methodologies were developed (e.g. for the Baseline survey or Focus groups) and they are presented in the Annex 2 attached to this report.

## Criteria

The analysis using the above mentioned tools was performed against the following criteria:

- Recognition
- Consistency
- Uniformity (application of standards)
- Clarity
- Purpose/Significance
- Efficiency.

## **3. Overview of PAR/PFM in Serbia**

This overview is based on the assessment of the visibility and communication aspects of PAR/PFM (including OGP) through the analysis of the following documents:

- PAR Strategy (2014) in the Republic of Serbia,
- Action Plan PAR Report 2015 – 2017, Annex 1: Implementation of the Action plan 2015 – 2017 - contribution of responsible institutions,
- Action Plan PAR 2018 -2020,
- PFM Reform Programme / report for 2015-2017,
- Final Report - self-assessment on the implementation of AP-OGP for 2016-17,
- OGP Serbia Action-Plan, 2018-2020,
- Indicative Strategy Paper for Serbia for the period 2014-2020,
- Strategy for development of e-Government 2015-2018,
- EU progress report for Serbia 2018,
- SIGMA Monitoring Report for Serbia, 2017 and
- Law on Public Administration.

The PAR Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, adopted in 2014, aims to transform the “state” administration in Serbia (as an instrument of political power) into a system of “public administration”, rendering comprehensive public service for citizens and the economy. Accordingly, the key focus in communication of PA reforms within all state levels has to be the provision of new solutions bringing tangible benefits for the citizens and the economy.

While the PAR Strategy is governing legal, effective, efficient and economical performance of the public authorities and organisations, the other strategies and public policies in specific areas are targeting subject-matter services. Although they are created separately, the PAR Strategy and other strategic, subject-matter strategies and public policies must be implemented in synergy, and showing

that the reform of the state administration goes into all pores of the society and the state apparatus, horizontally linking services to citizens and the economy.

The PAR and European integration are two interconnected processes. Although there is no specifically dedicated European *acquis* related to the public administration system, the EU integration process is forcing Serbia to modernise its own PA by adopting standards and principles from the European administrative law, the European Administrative Space and SIGMA. The implementation of these principles is of great interest to the citizens of Serbia, and therefore it is important that citizens are aware of the efforts and results arising from their implementation.

The **PAR Strategy 2014** does not recognise as a particular problem the way the general public perceives the public administration, or the necessity of continuous communication<sup>2</sup> of changes and reform processes in the state administration to the public. Unlike the PAR Strategy, the PFM Reform Programme (PFMRP) envisages visibility, communication and awareness raising activities. They were also foreseen within the Strategy for development of e-Government 2015-2018.

Within the first four strategic objectives of PAR Strategy, communication with the public is not planned, regarding the strategic changes that arise from the PAR, as well as the strengthening of public support for the PAR process. However, the importance of citizen participation is recognized in the new legislation, recently adopted: the Law on Public Administration (Article 77) and the Law on Local Self Government. The measures within the objective five of the PAR Strategy, aimed at improving transparency, ethical and responsible approach in discharging the PA duties, represent a good base for building general communication on PAR, related to the common people interests, demystification of government work, as well as to the openness of PA to the general public.

The PAR is monitored, as well as strongly supported by the EU. The **2018 EU Progress Report** noted the lack of general communication of the key government activities on legislation design and work with the public. Similar shortcomings in communication with the public were identified for the PFM, stating that the key budget transparency measures are not fulfilled. The report emphasised the importance of further strengthening of the independent supervision of external administrative control bodies (oversight mechanisms), as they provide 'citizens' right to good administration.

During the implementation of the PAR AP and other related PAR policies and strategies, significant results have been achieved by 2018, which became a catalyst for change in many PA areas. However, there is still much work to be done, which has been transferred for the next period. The **PAR AP 2015-2017 report** emphasises the following major achievements that are close to the citizens understanding of PAR and tangible results: e-baby registration, open data portal, civil servant system in LSG, budget surplus, citizens' participation in budgeting, whistle-blower protection. It also highlights a set of the priorities for 2018-2020 which are also of interest to the public, such as: salary reform, e-public procurement, 'one stop shop', e-Application for Information Booklets, etc. Although much has been achieved in the implementation of various PAR measures, followed by media appearances of high government officials, "Digitalisation of state administration" is the PAR measure that became mainstream in the public perception of the current PA reform.

The PAR Strategy objectives 1, 2, 4 and 5 have measures and results with high potential to be effectively communicated with the general public, and so they were in the past four years:

**Objective 1:** Improvement of organizational and functional sub-systems of PA

- e-Baby registration (wider promoted in public)
- The National Open Data Portal <https://data.gov.rs/sr>
- E-Government Portal <https://www.euprava.gov.rs> (760.000 registered users) / During 2016 and 2017 these services were continually promoted through social networks and media
- Savings in state budget in the amount of 180 Million EUR caused by ban on new employment in PA (starting from 2013).

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<sup>2</sup> More details are available in Annex 2 - Overview of the communication of PAR in Serbia.

- A website has been developed to monitor the rationalisation process  
<http://www.pracenjereformi.info>

**Objective 2:** Introduction of harmonized public service system relying on merits and improvement of HR management

- Establishment of National Academy of Public Administration
- Web site [www.napa.gov.rs](http://www.napa.gov.rs)

**Objective 3:** Enhancement of public finance and public procurement management

- Negotiating Chapter 32 – Financial Control has been opened
- Negotiating Chapter 5 – Public Procurement has been opened
- Central Harmonisation Unit (CHU) website

**Objective 4:** Enhancement of legal certainty and upgrading of business environment and quality of PA services

- The one-stop shop system and improvement in providing services in selected areas (e.g. e-Baby, e-Kindergarten)
- Exchanges of 6 biggest data bases including about 80% of data from official records (support to the implementation of the Law on General Administrative Procedure /LGAP (e-ZUP))
- The new Law on General Administrative Procedure
- Campaign – Dobra Uprava “*Uprava po meri svih nas*”
- Joint project and campaign “Ja, u centru pažnje” / [www.mojauprava.rs](http://www.mojauprava.rs) (EPuS & CEP)
- New Law on Inspection Supervision - website [www.inspektor.gov.rs](http://www.inspektor.gov.rs)

**Objective 5:** Improvement of transparency, ethical and responsible approach in discharging the PA duties

- Publish the so-called Civic Budget at central level and the level of units of LSG
- Implementation of OGP (*not too much communicated in public*)
- Introducing the institute of whistle-blowers / Law on Whistle-blowers Protection - a media [awareness raising campaign](#) “Whistle-Blowers Growing Stronger” was conducted
- High presence in media of the independent supervision external administrative control bodies: The Ombudsman and Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection

Priorities, measures and results planned to be achieved in next two years (as per AP 2018-2020) have to be even more visible. Identified priorities with high potential for communication with the general public are presented in detail in the Annex 2 of this Situation Analysis, but can be summarised as follows:

**Objective 1:** Improvement of organizational and functional sub-systems of PA

- Establishment of a central registry of citizens and improving existing registers
- Simplification of administrative procedures relevant to doing business in the Republic of Serbia
- **Further development of E-Government Portal** (fast and efficient exchange of data among state institutions, without the need for citizens to collect documents)
- Implementation of e-ZUP

**Objective 2:** Introduction of harmonized public service system relying on merits and improvement of HR management

- Laws that regulate equal status, salaries and other forms of remuneration of employees in public services, public agencies and other bodies and organisations established by RS

**Objective 3:** Enhancement of public finance and public procurement management

- Develop the future e-procurement system in the RS (*submitting e-bids, e-auctions, e-dynamic procurement system, e-catalogues, etc.*) has created a new basis and new directions have been identified for future development of e-procurements in the Republic of Serbia
- Raising the awareness of taxpayers about results in modernisation of financial control and procurement
- Regular publishing, with accompanying promotion, of annual budget execution profile and overall and detailed budget execution reports (*key budget transparency measures*)
- Adopting 5 rulebooks on planning and implementing capital projects

**Objective 4:** Enhancement of legal certainty and upgrading of business environment and quality of PA services

- Proposed Decree regulating one stop administrative services
- IT platform for all inspections (e-Inspector)
- Any further “one-stop shop” services.

**Objective 5:** Improvement of transparency, ethical and responsible approach in discharging the PA duties

- Enhancing the **open data initiative** and the transparency of the PA
- Changes and amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance (*critique of the expert public about the exclusion of public enterprises could cause negative PR*)
  - Introduction of new obligation - e-Application for **Information Booklets/Bulletins** (*Informatori o radu*), promoting the manual among the public, civil society, businesses and media (AP 2018-20).
- Open Data Portal (<https://data.gov.rs/sr/>) – good potential in 6 areas  
Amended (06/2018) Law on Public Administration, Article 77 (*enable the participation of the interested public in the decision-making process on policy-making*)
- Obligation of all PA bodies and organizations to develop integrity plans<sup>3</sup> – as one of the key measures in corruption prevention

Further developments that have high potential for communication with the general public are related to newly adopted legislation. With the aim of further professionalization and more efficient administration for the benefit of all citizens, the Government adopted nine laws proposed by MPALSG in December 2018. The legislation, in line with EU standards, refers to the improvement of the evaluation and rewarding of public sector employees, as well as the improvement of inspection supervision.

In addition to this, "Framework for HR Management in the State Administration of the Republic of Serbia", further improves HR management based on competencies and merit system. It is important for attracting and retaining good employees through assessment, promotion, horizontal mobility, salary system, professional development, training and career management.

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<sup>3</sup> In compliance with the dynamics and guidelines prescribed by ACA (Anti-Corruption Agency). The integrity plan includes: identified areas and processes which are especially prone to risks of corruption and other irregularities; assessment of risk intensity relative to risk of corruption and other irregularities in certain areas and processes; measures of legal and practical nature which need to be undertaken in order to prevent and remove risks, and deadlines for implementation of such measures; data on persons in charge of implementing measures from the integrity plan

The proposed amendments to the Law on the method of determining the maximum number of employees in the public sector extend its application by the end of 2019, aiming to maintain fiscal stability in the forthcoming period, and further reduction in the share of public debt.

The Law on Inspection Supervision has introduced modern inspection standards, especially in terms of strengthening the preventive and advisory role of inspections and transparency of PA work. It will improve, harmonize and coordinate the work of inspections at all levels. The e-Inspector system should make inspection operations more efficient and modern.

In January 2019, the MPALSG adopted three and updated two regulations in the area of performance evaluation, competences, internal job classification and systematization. Regulation on evaluation of work performance of civil servants refers to 20 – 30,000 state administration employees whose work is evaluated based on competences, knowledge, skills and behaviours necessary for achieving the objectives of state authorities. Regulation on the determination of the competencies for the work of civil servants defines the required competences, skills, knowledge and desired behaviour. Further promotion of the importance of these regulations, both at internal and external level will follow.

In the same period, at the proposal of the National Academy of Public Administration, the Government adopted the General programme for training of employees in local government units for 2019 and the Training programme for managers in local government units for 2019.

The Government adopted bylaws related to the Law on the Planning System in February 2019. The Regulation on the methodology of public policy management, analysis of the effects of public policies and regulations and the content of individual public policy documents increases the transparency of the drafting process and raises the quality and efficiency of public policy and regulations. The Decree on the methodology for the preparation of medium-term plans enables better prioritization of expenditures and more efficient allocation of budgetary funds in the medium term. The TAT and PPS will consider how to promote these significant improvements.

### **3.1 General communication of PAR – conclusions**

As already mentioned, the 2014 PAR Strategy did not sufficiently recognise the necessity of continuous communication with the public regarding general work and changes of the state administration. Other strategic documents and legislation, however, do envisage visibility, communication, raising awareness as well as citizens' participation, e.g. PFM Reform Programme, Strategy for development of e-Government 2015-2018, the Law on PA and the Law on LSG.

The attention to PAR has increased in Serbia in recent years, with more systematic information available about the situation and greater awareness of PAR, as stated in the SIGMA report (November 2017). However, the EU Progress Report 2018 stresses the lack of the general communication of the key government activities on legislation design and work reporting to the public. Communication efforts by the stakeholders are thus evident, yet there is a need for a more strategic and strengthened communication of the reforms.

The PAR Strategy has measures and results that have high potential to be effectively communicated with the general public. They include achievements that have been communicated with the public, on various occasions and in different media, and priorities planned to be achieved. Many actions of the PAR Action Plan have been a catalyst for change in many areas of public administration, on issues that previously had never been addressed, as open data, developing gender responsive budgeting, and paperless e-government. All these need to be more visible and more effectively presented to the general public.

The base for building general communication on PAR, related to the common people interest on demystification of government, as well as on openness of PA to the public, has to be on the narrative that each step during PAR is leading to tangible benefits for the citizens and economy. In planning the communication measures on raising awareness and visibility, attention needs to be paid to two-

way interaction with the citizens that will ensure assessment of the citizens' satisfaction with the delivery of the public services.

Specific directions for fully utilising the communication potential will be addressed in the Strategic Communication Framework.

## 4. Stakeholder capacities

The stakeholder resources have been assessed at the central and local levels, as they constitute somewhat different target groups, with regard to their different roles in the reform process. At the central level, interlocutors were the civil servants at the institutions with main involvement in PAR, dealing with communications. As there are hardly any servants specifically dealing with PAR communication at local level and there is no formal network of communicators at the local level yet, the respondents and interlocutors were the public servants who had some involvement in communication activities.

### 4.1 Central level

The overview of communication capacities, internal practice and communication with the public is the result of the evaluation of **questionnaires** which, as an introduction to **in-depth interviews**<sup>4</sup> with relevant institutions, were filled in by the representatives of the following institutions - main stakeholders:

- Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government including Good Governance (OGP)
- Ministry of European Integration
- Ministry of Finance
- Republic Secretariat for Public Policy
- Office for Information Technologies and e-Government
- National Academy for Public Administration
- Office for Cooperation with Civil Society Organizations
- Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities
- Tax Administration (recognized as very important for all citizens, although not part of ToR).

*The assessment does not represent a comparative analysis, but an overview of the capacities and ways of communication in institutions dealing with PAR.*

In order to further assess the environment for PAR communication, a **stakeholders' workshop**<sup>5</sup> was conducted in December 2018, which yielded observations contained in the SWOT below. Those were accompanied with **focus group discussion**, held with civil servants from these institutions in order to provide a more comprehensive insight into the internal perception of PAR/PFM.

The table below summarises the main stakeholders' resources dedicated to communication:

	Number of staff		Organisational structure	Strategic communication
	PR	Technical support		
<b>MPALSG</b>	3	Social media agency support	No department, there should be one	No strategy, there should be one
<b>MEI</b>	6 (2 partly technical)		Communication Department within the Sector for Communication, EU	2 Strategies: for EU integration process and for IPA funds with annual APs
<b>MoF</b>	5 + Cabinet	IT department	Department of Public Affairs	Yes

<sup>4</sup> Annex 3 – In-depth interviews with stakeholders

<sup>5</sup> Annex 4 – Stakeholder Workshop Report

PPS	1	1	No department, there should be one	No strategy, there should be one
NAPA	1	1	No department, in the process of organising jobs, will be known soon	Yes
OCSO	1	-	No department	No strategy, there should be one
OIT	3	Sector for IT	PR department	Yes, plus PR plan for each project

The information presented in the table below includes total amounts from state budget that are allocated/projected for communication activities and usually cover costs for staff hired specifically for communication/PR, photo and video production, press clipping services, websites maintenance and hosting, media and social media campaigns and other costs related to visibility and public relations.

Institution	Communication budget allocations for 2018 (RSD)	Projections for 2019 (RSD)	Projection for 2020 (RSD)
MPALSG	16.911.269,74	21.629.000,00	-
MEI	19.330.000,00	21.420.000,00	21.720.000,00
NAPA	-	3.314.000,00	3.500.000,00
	1.617.832,00	2.196.116,00	1.906.116,00

The findings regarding **internal and external communication procedure and practices** of the main stakeholders are as follows:

- *Internal communication* – during the interviews, all institutions reported that there is room for improving internal communication, except for the OCSOs (internal communication is at a desirable level, they emphasise good cooperation with MPALSG, Working Group for Good Governance and EUD). Focus group discussions produced the following findings related to internal communication:
  - PAR is not adequately communicated within the administration (“there are no habits for using new tools”)
  - Internal communication relies on personal contact, even when there are clear procedures
  - A notable lack of interest, motivation and inclusiveness, even among those who understand the concept of PAR.
- *Communication procedures* - Only MEI has a standardised communication procedure, with a clear vertical hierarchy (Assistant Minister, Head of Communications Department, Heads of Groups for EU funds communication...) and good horizontal practice. Although there are no standardised procedures in other institutions, communication is intense and all available channels are used.
- *Procedure for internet & social networks (posting and monitoring)* - Highly uneven practice:

- MPALSG - Website is maintained by a professional agency, but PR staff is in charge of preparing and uploading the content. When it comes to Social media it is a joint work of PR staff of MPALSG and professional agency hired through procurement.
- MEI - two persons in charge of placing the approved material,
- MoF & NAPA - IT department posts approved material,
- PPS – they do not use social networks,
- OCSO - complete autonomy in writing, editing and posting,
- MEI and MoF have standardised procedures for the website, MEI has a guide to social networks, other institutions do not have standards,
- MEI and OCSO have daily insight into website visits (OCSO average 250 daily visitors, while number of daily sessions is up to 350)
- OIT has regular support from Sector for IT and e-Government Development.

➤ *Posting online content (website and social networks)*

- MPALSG: once a day, often 3-4 times on website, 60-70% is associated with PAR; 4-5 posts per day on social networks (sometimes more) - FB, Instagram dominantly
- MEI: daily on website, FB, Twitter, YouTube, they do not use Instagram
- MoF: daily on website and FB, posts link to the site (Minister has personal Instagram)
- PPS: weekly; no social networks
- NAPA: twice a week; social media accounts launched in February 2019; assumed dynamics is 2-3 times a week
- OCSO: daily, without estimating how many times directly linked to PAR; FB and Twitter daily, occasionally YT and LinkedIn, do not have an Instagram profile,
- OIT: daily on website, on average 4 posts on Facebook and Twitter per week, they do not use Instagram.

➤ *Media clipping*

- MPALSG, MEI, MoF, OIT and NAPA – have contracts with agencies;
- MEI and MoF - analyse daily clipping, follow agencies and portals (about 100 news/day),
- PPS gets clipping from the Ministry of Education,
- OCSO uses Google search

➤ *Organization of events (PAR, media)*

- MPALSG: min once a week, 3-4 times a day participates in various events; mostly all contain PAR topics (twice a month directly linked to PAR); 90% open to the media
- MEI: monthly, often in partnership with NGOs, EU Info Centre...; PAR a regular topic; almost all are open to the media
- MoF: almost every day; PAR is sometimes the topic; mostly open to the media
- PPS: twice a month; PAR frequent a topic; rare media presence
- NAPA: once a month on average; not PAR related; almost all events are open to media
- OCSO: three events a month on average; occasionally, e.g: EU for citizens; media are invited only to large conferences,
- OIT: once a month on average; mostly PAR related.

➤ *Training* - All institutions are interested in training. Suggested topics / needs:

- MPALSG: coordination of communication, digital skills, presentational skills; good administration: communication skills (not necessarily public performance), with an emphasis on internal communication
- MEI: advanced level of communication - PR techniques and tools, cross-sectoral cooperation, case studies and successful stories (UK, Netherlands, France ..); new approaches to digital communication
- MoF: EU study visits to countries where PARs have been successfully implemented
- PPS: advanced communication skills, two-way communication, certified coaches for visibility and communication of PAR

- NAPA: all types of training, depending on what is offered
- OCSO: Media Relations, Networking, Social Networks, PR Planning
- OIT: Communication skills, preparations of PR strategies.

Further observations of the opinion of the civil servants on PAR communication capacities and challenges were made during the focus group discussion with civil servants. Namely, the following findings also emerged:

- *Understanding of PAR in general:*
  - PAR “new-borns” (NAPA, PPS) are well informed, interested and aware of the broader picture of PAR;
  - Insufficient knowledge of the scope of PAR among servants and what the PAR processes involve - everyone is aware of their own scope of work, but the wider picture about PAR communication is missing.
- *Repeating themes:*
  - Insufficient knowledge of communication terms, tools and channels
  - The transfer of responsibility to others
  - There are lots of examples of resistance to change
  - It is expected that empowered managers should contribute to better communication, especially to internal communication.

An overall assessment of the environment for PAR communication is presented in the SWOT, which was defined together with the stakeholders. The data gathering process was organised as a discussion and joint conclusion by consensus among the participants regarding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The participants of Stakeholder Workshop held in December 2018 discussed in detail all SWOT elements, but special attention was paid to the weaknesses such as: lack of capacities, especially human capacities, lack of horizontal and vertical coordination between communication officers, lack of procedures and even unclear terminology, negative image of public administration and civil servants, insufficient interest of media etc. and modalities of how to address these.

Improving the internal communication was seen as necessary. Modalities for dissemination of information mentioned were: top-bottom approach (Government through the MPALSG toward other ministries and local level), operational level (deputy ministers and PR officers) and technical level – centralised online content placed on the MPALSG web site. An agreement was reached that the MPALSG initiates more intensive cooperation at all levels, especially at the central level, by sending a letter of interest to all communicators to be much more involved in PAR communication.

The follow up TOWS matrix has been developed by the TAT, as a model for defining solutions for usage of strengths and opportunities for overcoming or reducing the weaknesses and threats.

There are 4 categories of strategies or tactics for fulfilling the general goal – being aware of how to use the strengths and opportunities:

1. Use of internal strengths (S) to take advantage of external opportunities (O).
2. Use of external opportunities (O) to overcome internal weaknesses (W).
3. Use of internal strengths (S) to avoid or reduce external threats (T).
4. Strategies to minimize internal weaknesses (W) and possibly reduce external threats (T).

One can get a concrete guide by reading the **conclusions** i.e. **strategies** in the TOWS table. The actual communication tools for employing the SWOT/TOWS guides (strategies) are depending on the available resources (human capacities, finances, technical capacities). Those actions will be developed with the Strategic Communication Framework based on the overall Situation analysis.



SWOT elements
TOWS elements

Internal	<p><b>Strengths (S)</b></p> <p>S1 Enough finances (budget, EU funds/support)</p> <p>S2 Start, new beginning (laws, establishment and strengthening the institutions)</p> <p>S3 General course (political will, awareness of administration and the citizens for change)</p> <p>S4 Cooperation with the CSO's</p>	<p><b>Weaknesses (W) Internal</b></p> <p>W1 Insufficient Capacities</p> <p>W2 Organization (structure, hierarchy, not sufficient management involvement and interest)</p> <p>W3 Absence of procedures</p> <p>W4 Deficiency of general information (what is the reform, who needs to lead)</p> <p>W5 There is no central PAR point</p> <p>W6 Coordination</p> <p>W7 Under informed state and public administration</p> <p>W8 Inadequate/not understandable language</p>
	External	<p><b>Weaknesses (W) external</b></p> <p>W9 Negative image of the State and Public administration</p> <p>W10 - Lack of interest of Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of knowledge</li> <li>- Lack of links for awareness for common societal interests</li> </ul> <p>Lack of continuity of media relations</p> <p>W11 Politicisation</p> <p>W12 Habits</p> <p>W13 Insufficient professionalism</p>
<p><b>Opportunities (O)</b></p> <p>O1 Operational level - Coordination (Chief of the PM cabinet – Council - meetings)</p> <p>O2 Web platform</p> <p>O3 Application (notice board - <i>oglasna tabla</i>)</p> <p>O4 Coordination (local/regional/central level)</p> <p>O5 Brief (where we are)</p> <p>O6 The upcoming Strategy (PAR Communication Framework)</p>	<p><b>SO Strategies</b></p> <p><b>Use of internal strengths (S) to take advantage external opportunities (O).</b></p> <p><b>SO1</b> Use general course to improve coordination</p> <p><b>SO2</b> Use new beginning to take advantage and to extent use of new web platform, briefs and application</p> <p><b>SO3</b> Use all 4 strengths (S1-S4) for increasing local, regional and central coordination</p> <p><b>SO4</b> Use all 4 strengths (S1-S4) to implement the actions envisaged with the upcoming PAR Communication framework</p>	<p><b>WO Strategies</b></p> <p><b>Use of external opportunities (O) to overcome internal weaknesses (W).</b></p> <p><b>WO1</b> Use activities envisaged in the upcoming PAR Communication framework to address all Internal weaknesses W1-W8 (insufficient capacities, structure, hierarchy, insufficient interest and involvement of the management, absence of procedures, deficiency of general information, absence of central PAR point, coordination, under informed state and public administration, inadequate language)</p> <p><b>Use of external opportunities (O) to overcome detected external weaknesses (W).</b></p> <p><b>WO2</b> Use activities of upcoming Communication framework to improve negative image</p> <p><b>WO3</b> Use activities of communication framework to increase interest, knowledge, social responsibility of media</p> <p><b>WO4</b> Use all Opportunities (O1-O6) to address politicisation</p> <p><b>WO5</b> Use Opportunities (O1-O6) to address to change habits and professionalism</p>
<p><b>Threats (T)</b></p> <p>T1 Political level</p> <p>T2 Lack of coordination</p> <p>T3 Sensationalism of the media</p> <p>T4 Slow Reform implementation</p> <p>T5 Elections (slowing down)</p> <p>T6 Fluctuation of the work force</p>	<p><b>ST Strategies</b></p> <p><b>Use of internal strengths (S) to avoid or reduce external threats (T).</b></p> <p><b>ST1</b> Use the new beginning, enough finances and general course to avoid and reduce threats from some political corners</p> <p><b>ST2</b> Use new beginning, enough finances and general course to reduce lack of coordination</p> <p><b>ST3</b> Use new beginning, enough finances and general course to speed up the reform implementation</p> <p><b>ST4</b> Use general course to advocate speeding up prior and after elections</p> <p><b>ST5</b> Use enough finances to train the work force, therefore to minimize fluctuation impact</p>	<p><b>WT Strategies</b></p> <p><b>Strategies to minimize internal weaknesses (W) and possibly reduce external threats (T).</b></p> <p><b>WT1</b> Use all strengths (S1-S4) and all opportunities (O1-O6) to minimize internal weaknesses and reduce threats i.e. employ all SO, WO and ST strategies.</p>

### General observations:

1. The beneficiaries are very well aware of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which is an excellent starting point for development of measures which will improve situation and lead to change.
2. It is notable that the section internal weaknesses and detected external weaknesses affecting PAR dominates by the number of items. These items are crucial by its nature and they are heavily affecting current situation. Most importantly there is awareness that PAR was not effectively communicated within the administration. The weaknesses and somewhat threats (T1 political level; T2 lack of coordination; T4 slow reform implementation) are the reasons behind inadequate communication.
3. Immediate measures to address the weakness are essential for expected change.
4. It is encouraging that the envisaged Strategic Communication Framework is rightfully seen as an opportunity which is a ground for its acceptance, motivation and willingness for implementation.
5. It is encouraging that there is determination for a “new beginning” and it is seen as a strength.
6. All derived Strategies from the TOWS analysis are a good ground and provide directions for developing activities within the SCF and its Action Plan.

## 4.2 Local self-governments level

The findings are the result of the **online survey**<sup>6</sup> among public servants in municipalities, carried out in December 2018. Brief report is attached in **Annex 6**.

Sent to 165 municipalities, with 58 complete responses received, it represents an overview of the LSGs capacities and ways of communication related to PAR and EU support. This section also includes findings from the **focus group discussions** held with 40 Local Self-Government (LSG) public servants from Kragujevac, Leskovac, Zrenjanin and Sjenica in December 2018 and January 2019 and 10 civil servants from Belgrade.

➤ *PAR information internal channels* - Respondents of the online survey have so far been informed on PAR through internal communication channels. However, 90% expressed a need for more information. The preferred channels for communicating the rights, obligations and changes introduced or to be introduced through PAR include email (75%), followed by training, meetings with supervisors, public events aimed at administration. 1/3 of respondents have identified the MPALSG website and only 13% the newsletter.

**Internal communication** was also discussed with the participants in FDGs, with the following findings:

- The participants in the discussions are mostly aware of their roles of LSG servants and the responsibilities regarding citizens. They are also aware of the unpleasant position of “being caught in the middle” between different expectations of the Government and citizens.
- Most of the LSG servants state that the two-way communication is missing and that only top-to-bottom communication is present.
- PAR is not adequately communicated within the administration.
- It is one-way, top-to-bottom communication.
- There is not enough relevant information, timely received, there is no order, procedure, protocol for sharing information.
- Most of internal communication relies on personal contacts.
- Highly appreciated among LSG servants are local network meetings and workshops (exchange of local practices) organized by SCTM as well as other professional networks.

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<sup>6</sup> Annex 5 – Results of the Online Survey Global Overview

➤ *Public administration situation and reform efforts* – 2/3 of respondents of the online survey believe that the PA situation is better/mostly better than five years ago, with 57% thinking there is considerable progress in the work of PA. When asked to assess progress in specific PA reforms, the central registry, followed by PA modernisation (e-services) received the highest score. The lowest score was given to depoliticisation, while decentralisation and professionalisation were in the middle.

The respondents think that the following reform processes have the highest effect on the overall PA system functioning: Establishing mechanism for official data electronic exchange, One-Stop-shop, Improving public procurement system, Tax Administration Reform and Taxation System, Establishment of NAPA, Human resources management system reform, Reform of salary system.

PFM - 40% of the respondents know what PFM is; others have heard of it, but they do not know what it means. When asked to evaluate the effects of the reform, respondents have given the highest score to improving transparency of budget process and more efficient control of tax payers and tax collection, programme budgeting, citizen budgets, improving the work of State Audit Institution, improving EU funds management, Public internal financial control strategy, gender budgeting.

Understanding of PAR in general was also discussed with the participants in the FGDs, with the following findings:

- The participants are differently informed about reform processes, some possess very solid knowledge, some are not sufficiently informed
- A wider picture of PAR is mostly missing, everyone sees his/her own scope of work
- Belief in PAR is weak, there is strong awareness of the complexity of PAR and lack of resources (technical equipment, HR).
- There is no consistency and equality of applications and procedures.
- There is not enough congruency of law and administrative procedures and requests.

In addition to the above, the following repeating themes emerged from the focus group discussions:

- Laws, bylaws and other pieces of legislation are mutually inconsistent.
- Obstacles – inconsistency, lack of specialists, knowledge and competences, lack of resources, especially technical equipment, incomplete implementation of initiated processes, distrust.
- Depoliticisation and transparency are recognised as extremely important and reiterated time and time again as a necessity.
- LSG servants are sceptical about Government's willingness or capacity to endure and support substantial change.
- Resistance to change, fear of losing job.

➤ *PAR communication channels and content* - 81% of the respondents of the online survey have been involved in communication with the public, mostly with media (through events, interviews), by preparing material for media and website and social media content. Nearly 2/3 of respondents are interested in training in PR, mostly communication with media and public appearance, as well as PR strategic planning and communication through social media.

The respondents also note that citizens' preferred channels for communicating the rights, obligations and changes introduced through PAR include informative/educational commercials on TV and on the internet, followed by info points in municipalities and info/educational texts in print media. These findings are confirmed through FGDs, where the communication channels mostly recognized include the Internet, TV, social networks, expert literature (Paragraf, Official Gazette) and word of mouth.

As for the quality of PAR media coverage and content on PAR, over 50% of respondents of the online survey believe that TV and internet coverage is good enough, while the radio coverage is insufficient. 47% think that the press coverage is good enough, but at the same time nearly 40% think it is insufficient. 39% of the polled believe that the social media coverage is good enough and the same number that it is not sufficient.

When asked about the specific media content on the topic of PAR, the respondents usually mentioned E-government, E-baby and other E-services (especially in local administration), One-Stop-Shop, along with the Prime Minister's and the Minister's (PALSG) media statements. The overwhelming majority of respondents saw PAR-related content on television (RTS dominantly), followed by the internet and then print media (e.g. Blic). 1/3 found the content satisfactory, while 53% though it was neither satisfactory nor dissatisfactory.

Taking into consideration all of the findings presented above, the TAT, together with MPALSG, started identifying communication capacities/resources at the local level – Public Information Officers (PIOs). The resources identified in LSGs (as illustrated in the map) will be provided necessary training in order to strengthen efforts related to PAR communication (particularly through strengthened media relations, information provision).



### 4.3 Stakeholder capacities - conclusions

The situation analysis findings confirm a lack of human resources dealing with communication, both at the central and local levels and the need to increase competences in communication of the existing personnel. All the findings demonstrate that internal communication needs to be improved, while using the preferred channels of all servants (e-mail mainly). The need for identifying mechanisms for more efficient coordination between stakeholders is among the most important outcomes. Moreover, the existing communication related networks (both horizontal and vertical, such as IPA Visibility Officers, LSG PRs, etc.) need to be more efficiently utilised in order to make the most of the current communication capacities of stakeholders.

There is a need for clear, well defined procedures for internal and external communication. Bearing in mind the different level of knowledge related to both PAR and communication practices, the available staff (at both central and local level) needs further training and continual support in implementing communication tools and activities.

The SA findings show that financial resources for PAR communication are not scarce, and they include budget resources of particular institutions, along with the currently ongoing TA projects. However, they need to be pooled together to produce synergetic effects.

The SA has established that all the mainstream communication channels are in place (events, traditional media, websites, social media etc.). The majority of them though prove to lack strategic approach, which will be addressed through Strategic Communication Framework.

When it comes to events, the analysis shows that numerous events are organised individually by various institutions. The events are often similar in nature, and therefore present an opportunity to apply an approach of combined efforts, which will in turn target more effectively appropriate audiences.

Different parts of the SA confirmed that the preferred communication channels of the public are television, websites and social media. The specific conclusions related to websites, traditional and social media will be addressed in the following sections. Based on the conclusions and recommendations, the SCF will propose a revision of concrete communication methods and tools, in order to achieve more efficient communication outcomes.

## 5. Existing online communication and awareness raising efforts of the main stakeholders

### 5.1 PAR/PFM websites analysis

The analysis is focused on the websites of the following institutions: MPALSG, MoF, MEI, PPS, NAPA, OCSO and OIT. In addition to these, the following websites were analysed, as they are related to and represent an important part of the public administration reform: *Praćenje reformi*, *Dobra uprava*, Partnership for open administration, E-Government Portal, Open Data Portal, Coordination Commission for Inspection Supervision. The matrix below presents a summary of websites performances and standards that can be used for quick overview and further comparison, as well as a checklist for what needs to be improved in each case.

	MPALSG	MoF	MEI	PPS	NAPA	OCSO	OIT
<b>Loading speed:</b>							
mobile	23.4	1.6	51.35	6.6	32.7	25.7	8.7
desktop	6.5	1.9	12.7	1.3	8.1	5.5	2
<b>Mobile friendly</b>	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>Onsite SEO</b>	BAD	BAD	BAD	BAD	BAD	BAD	BAD
<b>Google Page Test mobile/desktop</b>	13/60	95/100	Error	39/81	0/39	14/70	43/95
<b>HTTPS protocol</b>	NO	NO	NO	YES TLS 1.2	NO	NO	YES TLS 1.2
<b>Facebook SDK</b>	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
<b>Tag manager</b>	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
<b>Google analytics available</b>	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES
<b>RSS</b>	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
<b>Web Accessibility score</b>	83%	73%	77%	83%	77%	77%	89%
<b>Website grader</b>	52%	32%	47%	69%	55%	62%	74%
<b>Open Graph</b>	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES
<b>Sharable on social networks</b>	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES

The main findings are presented below<sup>7</sup>:

- The general impression is that websites are not systematically and strategically developed, but that any breakthroughs represent the result of efforts of individuals.
- Lack of uniformity among websites - there is not sufficient organisational or visually clear connection between them. Some sites resemble news portals rather than websites of state institutions, and the user is easily lost in navigation through each of the sites.
- The problems on all sites are relatively similar, for example, poor SEO optimisation, there is no photo optimisation, and there is a noticeable absence of tracking analytics and insufficient site performance.
- Content on sites is usually added regularly. However, most of the articles have been downloaded from agencies or other portals and do not represent original content. Google penalises such practices and disables penetration of search results (SERP).
- Text formatting is absent from all the sites and completely neglected on page SEO. To simplify the content types, there are static pages, and pages with news and articles. Attention should be devoted to SEO at least for the static pages (but it is recommended for news pages, too).
- Titles and meta tags are not used correctly, and only two sites have TLS certificates. It is important to keep in mind the main purpose of TLS certificates – to provide a proof of identity

<sup>7</sup> Detailed analyses are presented as Annex 7

of a website. Without it, security level is pretty low and anyone can falsely represent as a certain Internet domain and intercept communication with the server, which can be further exploited.

- Google evaluates websites with TLS certificates higher in search results, which means that sites without TLS are positioned low in search.
- Duplicated content is one of the oldest and still relevant reasons Google penalises website ranking. When it comes to static pages, structure and originality are very important. In the case of news pages, perhaps not as much, but it would make a lot of sense to try writing original content.
- Since 2014 over 40% of all Internet traffic has been consumed over mobile devices and that percentage has been growing. Taking into account that customer experience has always been one of the key factors in Google ranking, Google started penalizing websites that do not have a mobile-friendly version since April 2015.
- As far as the visual presentation of the content is concerned, it is insufficiently user friendly. Photos and illustrations are too large on some sites, others are too small, or non-existent. The size and colour of fonts on some of the sites are such that they make reading difficult.
- The analysis of PAR-related websites shows that certain information is hard to find, either placed under an inadequate or non-related category. Many important pages can be found only if specifically searched for on Google. All the websites look different, lacking uniformity or a sense of belonging to governmental institutions, which needs to be worked on.
- Content analysis from September to December 2018 shows that most news are written in a non-journalistic way thus losing audience, as visitors do not have patience to read. This way important information does not get visibility and citizens are not adequately informed. The texts (often including headlines) state that an event took place, but without emphasising positive consequences for citizens. News pages are uniform with no emphasis or distinction of important news from, say, event announcements. A brief overview of examples follows:

**MPALSG:** 70 articles were published, 24 were related to the reform processes and EU support. Most of published news articles (52) are about minister Ružić, his meetings and actions.

	<p>This text brings very important news for citizens. However, it begins with the fact that the assistant minister participated in the panel, continues with her statement etc. Nowhere is it said that the Central Register of the population will make life easier for people in such and such a way. Journalistic articles follow 5 journalistic questions, who, what, where, when, how. On this site “who” should always be citizens.</p>
	<p>This is a well written article. The only complaint here is that Minister Ružić was photographed with the Ambassador of Bulgaria in front of the same billboard used on several occasions for photos with other officials. This can create the impression that it is a template in which people only change and the sense of authenticity is lost.</p>

**MEI:** 81 is the number of news articles analysed. 23 refer to the reform process and support coming from the EU. Almost all of published articles are about minister Joksimović and her meetings and actions.



J. Joksimović: Brisel, za sada, ne piše novi izveštaj o Poglavљу 31  
24. DECEMBAR 2018. | BEOGRAD  
Brisel nije doneo odluku da se izradi novi izveštaj o skrivenju za Poglavље 31 o zajedničkoj spolnoj, bezbednosnoj i odbrambenoj politici EU, budući da temu zakuku nije potvrdilo svih 28 članica EU, kaže ministar za evropske integracije Jadrana Joksimović.

For instance, in first half of this article we only have what Minister Joksimović stated. Only later one sentence states that Serbia has provided significant contribution to security in Europe, followed by further minister's quotation.

It is obvious that this news was taken from Tanjug and not a product of MEI itself.

**MoF:** 50 articles were published, 13 on the reform processes and EU support. Most of published news articles are about Minister and his meetings and actions. Other articles are related to reform process, reports, news and announcements.

Ministar finansija Siniša Mali se sastao sa ambasadorom Francuske 10.10.2018.

Ministar finansija Siniša Mali i ambasador Francuske u Srbiji Frederik Mondoloni razgovarali su o saradnji dve države i projektima koji se sprovode u Srbiji, a u koje su uključene francuske kompanije.



Mali i Mondoloni su se saglasili da je saradnja dve države na visokom nivou, a na sastanku koji je održan u Ministarstvu finansija, bilo je reči i o odličnim ekonomskim rezultatima koje Republika Srbija postiže.

Siniša Mali i Frederik Mondoloni su kao posebno važne istakli koncesiju Aerodroma „Nikola Tesla“, koja se realizuje u saradnji sa francuskom kompanijom „Vanisi“, kao i projekat izgradnje postrojenja za preradu komunalnog otpada i sređivanje deponije u „Vinici“, koji sprovodi francusko-japanski konorzijum „Suez Environnement“.

This article is all about the conclusion that the minister and ambassador discussed certain topics, but it does not emphasize positive consequences of this event for citizens.

Although this is not stated in the text, the style of writing suggests that the news has been taken over from the agency and copied to MOF's website.

**NAPA:** 30 articles were published - 11 on the processes of PAR and EU support. Almost all articles have “NAPA...” in headlines and talk about meetings, seminars and news. They usually start by listing institutions /associations that took part in the event followed by naming the event.



НАПА УЧЕСТВОВАЛА НА РЕГИОНАЛНОЈ МИНИСТАРСКОЈ КОНФЕРЕНЦИЈУ У СКОПЈУ

Скопје, 26. октобар, 2018 – Министарство за информационално друштво и управу Републике Македоније, УНДП, Регионална НСВ за развој управе Астана (АСНН) и Регионална школа за јавну управу (РЕСТА), организовале су регионалну министарску конференцију у Скопљу са темом „Савремени изазови у јавној служби и улога партнерства за

Texts lack the provision of the right information that the reader may be interested in and they need to be written in a more receptive way.

**PPS:** There is no indication of the date of publication of the news. The search shows all the 47 news articles that exist on the site. It is estimated that in the observed period, six texts were published that communicate the reform process and EU support. Most of published articles are about different projects, analyses, meetings, news and conferences.



## 5.2 Social media analysis

The analysis<sup>8</sup> covered social media activity in the period from September to December 2018. It does not represent a comparative analysis, but an overview of communication through social media of all main stakeholders – MPALSG, MEI, MoF, OIT, OCSO and OGP. It took into consideration the content posted, interaction with followers, etc.

Below is an overview of social media accounts administered by relevant institutions, followed by an analysis of the accounts per institution and outline of most engaging posts on each social media:

		MPALSG	MEI	MoF	OIT	OCSO	OGP
Facebook	Followers	15,865	8,219	71	2,704	7,649	8,777
	Posts	190	186	30	45	113	80
Instagram	Followers	1,526		81			908
	Posts	97		30			142
Twitter	Followers	3,676	2,899		8,734	7,669	10,242
	Posts	240	196		85	179	260
Youtube	Followers	193	78			29	128
	Posts	5	156			4	0

### ➤ MPALSG

Facebook: Weekly interactions: around 1,000 fans. Number of posts considerably varies: from ten posts in one day, to zero (which is a bad practice). A large amount of media links is shared, over 37% of the content. 31% posts focus on the Minister's statements, meetings and visits. Graphically illustrated content is around 20%, but with no relevant text on it. Hashtags are insufficiently used.

Instagram: Weekly visits 371 – 527. Posts are more or less the same as in Facebook. Recent "Did you know" posts stand out with interactions above average. Hashtags are insufficiently used.

Twitter: Average interactions are around 25 per post. Number of posts – 240. Predominant number of posts are identical to Facebook releases. The largest number of interactions have posts that have tagged people and profiles with a larger number of followers.

YouTube: There are only 5 videos posted in the period analysed. There is a total of 239 subscribers, and average number of views is 150.

### ➤ MEI

Facebook: Weekly interactions: around 47 fans. 56% of posts focus on the Minister's Joksimović, meetings and visits. Hashtags are insufficiently used, and copy is not written following the best practices. A large amount of MEI site links is shared which is positive.

Twitter: Average interactions are around 11 per post. Number of posts – 196. Predominant number of posts are identical to Facebook releases. The largest number of interactions have posts that have tagged President of Serbia.

YouTube: 78 subscribers, an average number of views - 15-25. Most videos focus on the Minister.

No Instagram.

<sup>8</sup> Annex 8 – Social media analysis

➤ MoF

Facebook: Weekly interactions: around 15 fans. 30% of posts focus on Minister Mali, meetings and visits and 60% of posts are illustrations that practically do not receive interactions. Hashtags are insufficiently used, and copy is not written following the best practices.

Instagram: Average interactions with posts - 15. Posts are more or less the same as on Facebook. Hashtags are insufficiently used.

No Twitter or YouTube.

➤ OIT

Facebook: Weekly interactions: around 67 fans. Number of posts is low. There are too many days without posting and there is no diversity of posts.

Twitter: Average interactions are around 80 per post. Number of posts – 85. Predominant number of posts are identical to Facebook releases but there are more interactions on Twitter than on Facebook.

No Instagram or YouTube.

➤ OCSO

Facebook: Weekly interactions: around 223 fans. Number of posts considerably varies (67 days with no posts). 27% of posts are about contests, calls for projects, and 60% are reports and announcements.

Twitter: Average interaction is around 6 per post. Posts are mostly identical to Facebook releases.

YouTube: Only 4 videos were posted in the period analysed, with 118, 37, 18 and 229 views. There are 29 subscribers.

No Instagram.

➤ OGP

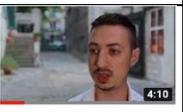
Facebook: Weekly interactions: around 64 fans, with 9 interactions per post average and there are 62 days with no posts. 57% of posts are shared links.

Instagram: Weekly visits 40. Posts are in a small measure similar to those on Facebook but they are focused on daily current events.

Twitter: Average interactions are around 10 per post. Number of posts – 260. Predominant number of posts are retweets – 61.5%.

YouTube: Last video was put on a year ago. There is a total of 128 subscribers.

The table below presents the most engaging posts on each social media per institution. This insight demonstrates that the posts with human dimension, as well as those presenting concrete benefits for citizens have the highest potential for reaching the audience following social media.

	MPALSG	MEI	MoF	OIT	OCSO	OGP
FB	 <p>Congratulating the City of Subotica Day 289 likes, 2 comments, 18 shares. Hashtags: #NaDanašnjiDan #UpravaPoMeriSvihNas</p>	 <p>National Conference on Cross-Border Cooperation in the Sava Centre. 33 likes, 8 shares.</p>	 <p>Revision of the 2019 budget proposal. 15 likes, 5 comments, 1 share, 3.1k views.</p>	 <p>Announcement on the presentation of the new site of the Office in the Home for Adult Disabled Persons. 37 likes and 2 shares.</p>	 <p>The announcement of the abolition of the use of seals for associations, endowments and foundations received 29 likes and 14 shares.</p>	 <p>Post congratulating you for going to school. 45 likes and 7 shares.</p>
Ins						
Tw						
YT	 <p>Svi mi, zajedno, činimo Srbiju 70K views · 6 months ago</p>	 <p>Sednica Odbora za evropske integracije, 26.12.2018. 40 views · 1 month ago</p>			 <p>Program Evropa za građane u Srbiji - Centar z... 118 views · 6 months ago</p>	

### 5.3 Websites and social media – conclusions

As already mentioned, online communication channels are mostly in place. They include websites of institutions and relevant initiatives, as well as profiles on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube). The findings, however, show lack of systematic approach to developing websites (including visual presentation, lack of clear connection, security related issues, not properly formulated content) and managing social media profiles.

There is a huge communication potential in numerous web presentations and social media accounts with tens of thousands of followers altogether, which needs to be streamlined to produce a more

powerful effect. This also includes placing more attention on two-way communication, through online interaction with followers.

The financial resources and technical expertise necessary for a significant improvement of the reach of websites and social media are not overly demanding. In this particular case, a little additional effort goes a long way.

The analysis also shows that the content is more or less regularly posted, however it needs to be revised and adapted in order to reach target audience and achieve more efficient communication outcomes.

The concrete proposed methods and tools will be addressed in the Strategic Communication Framework, to tackle improved communication through these channels, which are the citizens' second preferred communication channels, just after television.

## 6. Analysis of PAR/PFM coverage in print, online and electronic media<sup>9</sup>

- The analysis includes the media coverage related to the MPALSG, OIT and OCSO, in the period of September–December 2018, taking into consideration the tone of the articles, topics covered, type of media and the articles' content, including the messages delivered.

The analysis of MPALSG, OIT and OCSO, based on available data from institutions is presented below per institution:

- **MPALSG:**
  - There were 10,668 articles published in total. Web portals and print cover the most of the articles. Web = 3,955, while in print there were 4,915, and in electronic media (TV + agencies, Beta for example) 1,798 articles.
  - Articles refer to decentralization, rationalization of the number of employees, salary levels/ education unions, state administration, national academy, law on administrative procedure, maximum number of employees, registers, public sector, e-zup information system, digitization, administrative inspection, public administration, local self-government, advanced employee training, e-administration, inspection control, one stop shop, MPALSG, IMF, Serbian-Korean IT access centre
  - The majority of the articles were in neutral tone (10,605), and there were several positive (27) or negative (36) articles.

Below is an example of an article, with emphasised strong and weak points.

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<sup>9</sup> Annex 9 – Media analysis

Datum: 31.10.2018  
 Medij: Beta  
 Link: <http://www.beta.rs>  
 Autori:  
 Tema: Ministarstvo državne uprave i lokalne samouprave  
 Naslov: Prva tranša od 30,5 miliona evra za reformu javne uprave

Prva tranša od 30,5 miliona evra za reformu javne uprave  
 BEOGRAD, 31. oktobra 2018. (Beta) - Evropska komisija odobrila je prvu tranšu Srbiji od 30,5 miliona evra za reformu javne uprave, saopštio je danas Ministarstvo državne uprave i lokalne samouprave.

Kako se navodi, na četvrtom sastanku Platforme za dijalog o politikama u okviru reforme javne uprave konstatovan je napredak u ovoj oblasti, sa napomenom da je potrebno da se veća pažnja i rad usmeri na jačanje administrativnih kapaciteta u upravi.  
 Predloženo je, kako se navodi, da je Evropska komisija dala odobrenje za isplatu prvog finansijskog zahteva za izvršenje obaveza predviđenim Sektorskim reformskim ugovorom i to u iznosu od 30,5 miliona evra.  
 Ministar državne uprave i lokalne samouprave Branko Ružić istakao je da su te dobre vesti rezultat velikih uložanih napora celokupne Vlade Srbije u proteklom periodu u stabilizaciji javnih finansija, reformi javne uprave i ispunjavanju obaveza u procesu evropskih integracija.  
 Kako navodi, zakonodavni okvir je znatno unapređen u proteklih godinu i po dana, posebno u oblasti upravljanja ljudskim resursima, unapređenju kvaliteta usluga koje pružamo građanima i obezbeđivanju većoj transparentnosti rada i inkluzivnosti javnosti u donošenje politika.  
 Ministarka za evropske integracije Jadranka Joksimović istakla je da se Vlada Srbije proteklih godina borila sa finansijskom krizom i uprkos činjenici da su rezultati u raznim oblastima napravljeni, ipak u upravi nedostaju kapaciteti koji bi se posvetili više evropskim integracijama i povećanju sredstava koj su dostupni iz EU fondova.  
 Ministar finansija Siniša Mali istakao je da je najznačajniji napredak u sprovođenju Programa Reforme upravljanja javnim finansijama ostvaren u unapređenju kredibiliteta makroekonomskih prognoza, u daljem sprovođenju višegodišnjeg programskog budžetiranja na svim nivoima vlasti, poboljšanju strateškog i zakonodavnog okvira za sprovođenje finansijske kontrole u javnom sektoru, kao i poboljšanju propisa i procedura za javne nabavke.  
 Šef Delegacije EU u Srbiji Sem Fabric ponovio je važnost reforme javne uprave za pristupanje Srbije Evropskoj uniji, ali i naglasio da je neophodno da se dalje aktivnosti usmere na reformu javno-službeničkog sistema, baziranog na transparentnosti, profesionalnosti i meritomosti, kao i boljem planiranju politika i makroekonomskoj stabilnosti.  
 Ostale fotografije uz tekst

The first paragraph as well as the article title carry the main message. This is good.

**PRO:** PAR is mentioned, and this is one of few articles where it is explained, in brief, what does it all includes (human resource management, citizen services, transparency...)

**CON:** Ministers from different departments (Ministries) are emphasized, by their name and their quote.

Copy-paste of the press release, without any change or without a journalistic intervention. Vast number of articles and used media, **no efficiency**.  
**Significance of the information** is only in the article title and its first paragraph.

➤ **OIT:**

- There were 8,829 articles - 2,750 in print, 1,528 in electronic media and 4,551 on the web.
- Articles refer to GMO, IT sector subventions, e-ZUP information system, IT business, passenger transportation/digital application, IT & e-government, sci-tech parks, entrepreneurship, IT within education, public sector/public administration, science fund, IT high school, e- government
- Vast majority is neutral (8,753 articles), while there were 55 positive and 21 negative articles
- Below is an example of an article, with emphasised strong and weak points.

Datum: 31.12.2018  
 Medij: Srpski telegraf  
 Rubrika: Vesti  
 Autori: Redakcija  
 Tema: Lokalna samouprava, E uprava (Elektronska uprava), Državna uprava  
 Naslov: Elektronsko državljanstvo

**EVIDENCIJA**

**Elektronsko državljanstvo**

U skladu sa Zakonom o dopunama Zakona o državljanstvu Republike Srbije, prvi put je uspostavljena jedinstvena evidencija o državljanima Srbije u elektronskom obliku, saopštila je Kancelarija za IT i eUpravu. Kako se navodi, ovo znači da građani više neće morati da budu kuriri koji nose uverenje o državljanstvu sa jednog na drugi šalter, već će ova elektronska evidencija biti dostupna svim službenicima državne uprave i lokalne samouprave.

Key info within the first article sentence.

Communication refers to the individual (not the institution) which is good. And also written in plain language, understandable to everyone.

Although a very short article, the message is clear (and in positive tonality).

Main message is extracted from the much longer press release.

➤ **OCSO**

- Significantly smaller scope of articles that give better insight in covered topics. Far more precise and shorter articles, key message easier recognized. The articles were mostly generic and tone is primarily neutral

The findings can be summarised as follows:

- Numerous articles are published, but there is no news within most of them – there is only text, only information. Written in technical language, informing that somebody (Ministry) is doing its job, without emphasising relevant topics for the targeted audience.
- Vast number of articles and used media, without key information – creates communication noise. That makes it hard for the reader to clearly understand the importance and main message of each one. The first paragraph of an article that should carry the information often does not answer one or two, and almost never all key questions: who, what, where, when, how and why.
- Different communication styles are present. Communication refers to the institution instead of individual. Communication often lacks clarity.
- Certain topics are present in media for several months, without actually presenting new information for the audience. Often no real news are presented, but only information and repetition of topics/articles. This lack of focus does not support the creation of positive publicity/reputation.
- The most common type of articles are those of neutral tonality. The articles need to become useful, give clear information, either positive or negative, in order to improve efficiency.
- There is no specific identification/recognition of PAR and what it all applies to. Very few mentions of EU can be observed.

## 6.1 Media coverage – conclusions

The findings of the analysis show that the media coverage of PAR is not missing, or even insufficient. On the contrary, there are thousands of articles related to PAR/PFM/EU topics, but the information is not sufficiently and adequately reaching the public.

Therefore, additional efforts are needed to make media coverage more suitable to the citizens' needs. A shift is needed in presenting the content related to the reforms and their benefits to help citizens connect them to their own experiences. To achieve that, improved quality of media relations is needed, along with a revised way of providing information to media, which should focus more on benefits for the public.

Television is the preferred source of information for the citizens, as confirmed by several sources of information (citizens survey, FGDs and online survey among LSGs) used for this analysis. This finding should pave the way for a more intense and focused use of TV in communicating reforms. Concrete methods and tools will be proposed in the Strategic Communication Framework.

## 7. Public perception of PAR/PFM reforms

Public perception of PAR/PFM as a result of available resources, communication efforts and media coverage of PAR/PFM, was analysed based on the information collected through a nationwide survey and focus groups with citizens. The survey<sup>10</sup> on public attitudes towards Public Administration Reform as part of the data collection phase of the Situation analysis was carried out among 1,049 citizens in December 2018. It gauged the awareness, knowledge and attitudes towards public administration, civil servants, PAR, PFMR, EU support, as well as frequency of use of various types of media outlets covering current affairs and news. Full report is presented in **Annex 11**.

In addition, focus group discussions were held with 60 citizens from Belgrade, Kragujevac, Leskovac, Zrenjanin and Sjenica in December 2018 and January 2019 in order to assess general perception of PAR. Detailed information on FGDs is presented in **Annex 12**.

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<sup>10</sup> Annex 10 – Report on Baseline Survey on Public Perception of PAR/PFM reforms

➤ *Attitudes towards public administration and civil servants* - Improvements to the PA relative to five years ago (better and mostly better) are perceived by 37% of those polled. The PA was seen as ('mostly') 'worse' now by 16% respondents, whilst 43% observed no change. The primary reasons for coming into formal contact with the civil service is the need of general administration services: excerpts from civil registers, certificates, certifying documents or similar services (58%), followed by tax administration and social affairs. About 2% reported never having had a contact with civil servants. The average score of 3.25 was awarded to the overall performance of PA. Between 52% and 56% of those polled reported substantial/ complete satisfaction with the performance of civil servants (courtesy, professionalism and competence).

➤ *Awareness of and knowledge about PAR and PFM* - 24% of those polled knew what PAR was, 26% have never heard of the process, whilst 46% reported being aware of the PAR concept, but did not know what it entailed. Four of the six on-going or completed reforms were recognised by more than one half of those polled: professionalisation (51%); optimisation (51%); modernisation (65%); and introduction of the Central Civil Registry (63%). Decentralisation and de-politicisation were acknowledged by 46% and 48%, respectively. Respondents reported that 'tangible' or 'very big' improvement was the result of introduction of the Central Civil Registry (71%) and modernisation (70%), followed by professionalisation (51%) de-centralisation (50%) and optimisation (47%). De-politicisation is the only reform where responses 'no' or 'very little' improvement outnumbered 'tangible'/'very big' improvement, by 62% to 29%.

As for the upcoming reforms: 59% of respondents are aware of electronic data sharing system, taxation reform and one-stop shops (55% each); salary system reforms (54%); and human resources management reform (42%). Improvements to public procurement were familiar to 43%, whilst 33% were aware of the National Academy for Public Administration. Respondents felt these reforms would have a positive impact on the overall performance of PA: electronic data sharing system (73%); one-stop-shops (66%); tax administration and taxation reform (57%); NAPA (53%); human resources management reform (52%); and enhancement of public procurement (50%).

Satisfaction with the impact of PAR (substantial/complete) on savings was reported by: 38% for savings in terms of money, 46% in terms of time and 43% for better service quality. 19% are dissatisfied with both time saved and service quality and 24% with financial savings.

Although it has been implemented for the past two years, the Public Financial Management Reform Programme was familiar to only 20% of respondents, while 36% have not heard of it at all, or are aware of it without knowing what it entailed. Percentages of respondents familiar with on-going reform processes ranged from 46% for more efficient tax collection and audit to 25% for gender-responsive budgeting. In between these are strengthening the State Audit Institution (SAI) at 29%; multi-annual programme budgeting and public internal financial control (PIFC) development strategy, with 30% each; strategy to combat irregularities and fraud in handling EU funds at 32%; and greater transparency of budgeting, at 34%.

Respondents believe that reforms carried out have had a positive impact on: more efficient tax collection and audit (56%); introduction of a Citizens' Guide to the Budget (51%); multi-annual programme budgeting (51%); and strategy to combat irregularities and fraud in handling EU funds (50%). Gender-responsive budgeting, PIFC development strategy, strengthening the SAI, and greater transparency of budgeting were seen as positive by 46 to 48 percent.

The FGDs gave some further insights into the attitudes and connotations of PAR to citizens:

- The knowledge about PAR depends on the level of education, place of living and the employment status of citizens. More satisfied and educated citizens are more informed and motivated to gain information about PAR.
- Information on goals and activities of PAR is not clear and sufficient and there are difficulties for citizens to connect personal experiences with administration to PAR.
- It is not sufficiently clear and communicated who is in charge of PAR.
- Projections, negativism, critics and distrust create an atmosphere of resignation and pessimism.

- Mostly, PAR is experienced through critique and distrust. Information about PAR is selective, received when necessary in order to conduct an administrative task or communicate with PA for other reasons. There is no wider picture of how PAR is envisioned.
- The word “reform” has a negative connotation and actual PAR is perceived as one more in the history of everlasting reforms. That discourages people to seek information about PAR.
- Communication channels are usually word of mouth and the Internet.
- Citizens state that there is a lack of competent and knowledgeable public servants who are capable and willing to give trustful and accurate information when needed.
- A perception that PA employees do not bear responsibility for their actions and consequences for the mistakes is seen as a communication obstacle, along with the presence of politics, nepotism and cronyism, as well as interdependence of public and private sector.
- Citizens note that one negative example can discard a lot of positive examples.
- Personally, citizens experience PAR as not adjusted to their needs, especially in health and education (only e – Prescriptions are seen as useful).
- Positive examples are mostly related to e-Baby, e-documents and other ways of implementation of modern technologies. Those particular consequences of PAR are perceived as more adequately communicated than others, but older, less educated or lower income persons are not seen as beneficiaries of those.

➤ *Information and media reporting* about PAR - Television was seen as the most important source of information about PAR (51%), followed by news portals & websites (21%), social networks (9%), print media (5%), radio (4%), while 2% mentioned posters, leaflets and billboards (older population rarely, while the youngest claimed to read them regularly).

31% of respondents felt positively about MPALSG efforts to provide information and raise awareness about their rights, obligations and changes to PA, while 21% saw these activities as ‘poor’. 49% of respondents wished to learn more about PAR, while 35% did not need additional information. Informative/educational advertisements on TV were chosen as the best way to get information on PAR by 68 %. Information booths in municipal offices/other government buildings (at 28%) followed, along with informative/educational advertisements online (27%). Educational features on the radio were mentioned by 7%, and billboards, ads, and posters by 11% of the polled.

49% of those polled saw the quality of PAR coverage on television sufficient or exceptional, while 37% were dissatisfied. Around 40% felt the quality of PAR reporting in print media and online was sufficient, while 30% saw it insufficient in print and 23% online. Those polled mostly saw/heard PAR-related media content on television (74%). Respondents also cited websites (12%), social networks (7%), radio (3%), billboards (2%), or school/university (1%). However, 36% could not recall actual content, 28% have not heard/seen PAR features anywhere and 24% could not recall the exact topic. A small percentage cited TV content in general, staff cuts and e-Government.

## 7.1 Public perception of reforms – conclusions

Despite numerous communication channels established and substantial efforts invested by stakeholders into the communication of PAR, the public remains insufficiently aware and informed of what reforms actually entail and how they bring about benefits for the citizens.

Nearly all the main findings from this analysis point into one direction: the communication of reforms needs to be related to citizens’ needs and experiences. Therefore, there is an evident need for translating the progress and results of the reforms into something citizens can easily relate to. This will, in turn, support a change of the citizens’ unflattering perception of public service.

In addition to this, results and achievements of the reforms need to be clearly “branded”, so that they can be clearly associated with PAR, but without actually using the word “reform”, as it produces resistance.

The dominant and preferred channels for the public are TV and internet, which provides room for developing adequate and effective content. The proposed methods will be elaborated in detail in the Strategic Communication Framework.

## 8. Awareness of the EU support

➤ A part of the **survey of public attitudes** towards Public Administration Reform analysed in the previous section was specifically devoted to assessing the awareness, knowledge and attitudes of citizens towards the EU support in general and to PAR in particular, together with their opinion on EU support coverage. In addition to that, the **online survey** (primarily analysed in Section 4.2) among public servants in municipalities assessed the awareness of EU as a donor, its support in general and for concrete projects. *Media coverage of EU support* - Most respondents of the survey of public attitudes towards PAR have never heard about EU support initiatives in the media or were unable to recall this information (61%); another 27% remembered coming across some information, but did not recall the actual content. A small percentage recalled infrastructure development and educational initiatives (2% each) and support to healthcare and public administration reform (1% each).

Respondents stated that they mainly saw/heard about EU support on television (71%), followed by websites (15%) and social networks (7%), radio (3%), schools/universities (2%), and YouTube and billboards, with 1%. 78% of those polled passively receive information about EU support to Serbia, with as few as 8% claiming to have actively sought out these issues since they interested them.

The findings of the online survey **among public servants** in municipalities show the following: when asked to identify media content related to the EU support, the only two recurring answers were negotiations and PAR (although only 4 mentioned the first and 3 respondents the latter). Over 2/3 of participants in the survey state they are passive recipients of information about EU support to Serbia - they do not actively seek it. For 57% of respondents TV was the source for media content about EU support to Serbia, and for 32% - internet portals. 41 % found the content satisfactory, and nearly half neither satisfactory nor dissatisfactory.

In line with the results on *Media coverage of EU support*, the findings on perceptions of citizens regarding EU support show limited awareness of citizens in relation to EU support to Serbia.

➤ *Attitudes towards European Union support* - Although 15% of the respondents of the survey of public attitudes towards PAR reported that the EU was Serbia’s greatest donor, most (19%) placed China, Germany (18%) and Russia (15%) at the top. The EU was seen as the key source of funding for PAR by 25%, while additional 23% believe Germany provided the most assistance. Further, the EU support for PAR was also part of FGDs with citizens and these findings are confirmed with citizens stating that some information about EU support for PAR is present in the discussions, but citizens are not aware of its scale and scope and do not believe that it is reaching the targets.

As explanation of the above comes the answer of 44% of respondents in the citizens survey who state they have heard about at least one EU-funded initiative, with 30% citing projects reconstructing/building new infrastructure and 12% mentioning healthcare and education projects. Initiatives supporting public institutions were cited by only 8% of the polled. 42% stated they are not familiar with any initiatives. Regarding the views on EU-funded projects, those were primarily positive (39%), while 13% see them as negative (university and school students). 64% felt the positive impact, 25% were unable to assess it, and 11% saw it as negative.

The findings that emerged from the online survey **among public servants prove that larger part of LSG servants are aware of EU support to Serbia**: a little over 30% of the respondents think that the EU is the biggest donor to Serbia, followed by 22% Germany. As for the countries/organisations

/institutions that financially supported PAR in Serbia, 32% of the respondents identified the EU, closely followed by Switzerland 27% and Germany 20%.

82% of the respondents have heard of an EU funded project, and nearly all believe that EU projects have a positive effect on Serbia. When asked to identify a specific EU funded project, most respondents mentioned a cross border cooperation project, closely followed by an initiative related to PAR and PFM, as well as EU PRO.

## 8.1 Awareness of the EU support – conclusions

The EU is by far the biggest donor to Serbia, supporting Serbia in achieving the EU standards and values. It has been assisting Serbian reforms to foster growth and development, improve living standard and boost public services. The Serbian public is generally supportive of EU membership: the opinion polls show that over the past years public support for EU integration has fluctuated around 50%. However, deeper knowledge about the EU and its assistance to Serbia is limited.

Financial assistance provided to Serbia by the EU in the PAR and PFM areas is significant. Over the years, this support has been communicated widely by various beneficiaries (central level institutions and organisations, local self-governments, civil society), the EU Delegation, dozens of EU funded projects, the Serbian Government and other stakeholders.

Despite all these communication efforts, citizens seriously lack awareness of EU financial support (this is a repeated finding of consequent polls and surveys, also confirmed by this situation analysis). As such an evident communication gap needed to be addressed, the EU assistance related communication practices in particular sectors are being revised, in order to yield more effective communication outcomes. The new communication direction entails sectoral approach which places an emphasis on coordination, pooling of resources and (visual) identity. It underlines the need for unified, yet targeted messages and clear and understandable language which focuses on human/personal aspect.

The directions and methods proposed in the Strategic Communication Framework will be fully in line with the new sectoral communication approach, aimed at improving efforts placed into communicating the relevance and substance of EU support to PAR/PFM.

## 9. Key findings and recommendations

This section presents the key findings on stakeholders' capacities and efforts to communicate PAR (on central and LSG levels), citizens' awareness, knowledge and attitudes towards PAR/PFM, civil servants and EU support. Having in mind the findings, the recommendations for enhancing functionality, efficiency and clarity of PAR internal and external communication are as follows:

Findings	Recommendations
<b>Stakeholders' capacities</b>	
<p><b>Insufficient capacity within PA to deal with communication in a streamlined manner (lack of human resources)</b></p> <p><b>Inconsistency and different knowledge about PAR among civil and public servants (from excellent to modest, or even non-existing)</b></p> <p><b>Different level of knowledge about communication channels and communication</b></p> <p><b>Public servants are aware of negative</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With new employment restricted for years now, it is recommended to address lack of capacities by identifying and training existing staff</li> <li>• Training at both central and LSG levels is necessary (to be further elaborated in Training Needs Analysis Report)</li> <li>• Unifying internal and external communication practices, accompanied by standardised procedures</li> <li>• Improving internal communication within administration, with particular emphasis on two-way communication</li> </ul>

<p>perception of citizens and they usually experience criticism, producing in turn high resistance to change</p> <p>Clear examples of good practices and enhancing functionality and clarity of PAR communication on internal level are needed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering initiatives from the LSG level more frequently and establishing regular communication channels</li> <li>• Creating network of competent communicators on central and local level in order to enhance and support what is now practiced as the “word of mouth” communication</li> <li>• Improving significantly coordination of both internal and external communication</li> <li>• Establishing a central online location for all information on PAR/PFM, to be accessed by all levels of administration, allowing easier sharing and delivering of data and information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Existing communication and awareness raising efforts of the main stakeholders</b></p>	
<p><b>Websites</b></p>	
<p>Communication potential insufficiently used</p> <p>An absence of systematic/strategic approach</p> <p>Lack of uniformity among websites</p> <p>Poor SEO and photo optimisation, an absence of tracking analytics and site performance</p> <p>Insufficient presence of original content.</p> <p>Text formatting is absent and neglected on page SEO</p> <p>Titles and meta tags are not used correctly, and only two sites have TLS certificates</p> <p>Possibilities to use internet in PA and e-Government are perceived as positive and as the most communicated part of PAR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collecting all the information spread across many locations online in one place, either in a form of aggregator or a single location</li> <li>• Implementing security certificates on sites</li> <li>• Achieving uniformity of sites (establishing visual and organisational standards)</li> <li>• Optimising content and performance</li> <li>• Simplifying the structure, creating original written content</li> <li>• Metrics and analytics - introducing and using tools for monitoring statistical visits and later studying these data</li> <li>• Making websites mobile-friendly</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social media</b></p>	
<p>Communication potential insufficiently used</p> <p>Number of posts considerably varies: from ten posts in one day to zero</p> <p>A large amount of media links is shared</p> <p>Hashtags are insufficiently used</p> <p>Posts on different social media are more or less the same</p> <p>Post are not written following the best practices</p> <p>Insufficient interaction with followers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent posting on social networks (preparing weekly/monthly publication plan)</li> <li>• Using more of the appropriate hashtags</li> <li>• Creating visuals and short video content</li> <li>• Developing more of the original content</li> <li>• Improving the way content is written</li> <li>• Posting real time information on institution’s work and benefits it provides to citizens</li> <li>• Encourage more interaction and two-way communication with followers</li> <li>• Customize the content for each of the networks separately</li> <li>• Developing particular social media strategy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Print, online and electronic media coverage</b></p>	
<p>Television is the dominant source of information on PAR, followed by news portals &amp; websites and word of mouth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using citizens’ preferable channels of communication: TV, followed by websites and social media</li> <li>• Increasing the interest in the topic by focusing on results, not the procedures and on the individual, instead of the institution</li> <li>• Defining clear messages of interest to target audience</li> </ul>

<p>Articles are numerous, but without news within the most of them – there is only information written in technical language</p> <p>Different communication styles are present</p> <p>Communication refers to the institution instead of individual</p> <p>Communication lacks clarity and focus</p> <p>Neutral articles as the most common type</p> <p>There is no recognition of PAR and what it all applies to</p> <p>Insufficient acknowledgment of EU support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the way of writing of press releases (the rule of inverted pyramid)</li> <li>• Providing national and local media with simplified structured information</li> <li>• Make strong media partnerships to help media better inform the public</li> </ul>
<p><b>Citizens awareness and perceptions of PAR/PFM</b></p>	
<p>Reforms are perceived as a long lasting process</p> <p>Citizens are insufficiently informed, or motivated to gain information on reforms</p> <p>Negative attitude to civil service as slow, bureaucratic and expensive, as well as public servants as insufficiently competent</p> <p>Ignorance of the citizens' needs and rights (distrust that it is intended for citizens)</p> <p>Insufficient connection between personal experiences and PAR effects</p> <p>PAR communication insufficiently transparent and not in accordance with real situations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key focus in communication of PA reforms has to be the provision of new solutions bringing tangible benefits for the citizens and economy</li> <li>• Citizens need to understand their rights, obligations and the changes introduced, to be able to form opinions on PAR and use all benefits</li> <li>• Communicate PAR/PFM efforts in a consistent, clear, coherent, understandable manner with clear results</li> <li>• The reforms should be fully connected to personal experiences of citizens</li> <li>• Use the most preferable communication channels: TV, websites and social media</li> <li>• Further support the view that PAR is complex and long lasting process, but the benefits for the society are worth the efforts</li> </ul>
<p><b>Awareness of EU support</b></p>	
<p>Insufficient awareness of EU support in general</p> <p>Insufficient recognition of EU support to PAR processes and specific initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate the EU support to PAR in a coherent, clear, sufficient, understandable, consistent manner, in order to yield more accurate perception by citizens</li> <li>• Put focus on results from EU support, not processes</li> <li>• The supported initiatives need to be clearly EU marked and communicated by connecting them to personal experiences of citizens</li> </ul>

## **10. List of annexes**

Annex 1 - Situation Analysis Framework

Annex 2 - Overview of the communication of PAR in Serbia

Annex 3 – In-depth interviews with stakeholders

Annex 4 – Stakeholders workshop

Annex 5 - Online Survey Global Overview

Annex 6 – Brief report on Online Survey

Annex 7 – Websites analysis

Annex 8 – Social media analysis

Annex 9 – Media analysis

Annex 10 – Report on Baseline Survey on Public Perception of PAR/PFM reforms

Annex 11 – PAR Public Opinion Pool

Annex 12 - Focus Group Discussions Report