



REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

ACTION PLAN

DELIVERY ASSESSMENT



I. INTRODUCTION

The Bulgarian Government joined the Open Government Partnership in 2012, sharing the idea of open government in Bulgaria based on more transparency, accelerated introduction of modern technologies in the operation of the administration, wider involvement of citizens in the decision-making process and enhanced corporate responsibility.

II. ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Council of Ministers drafted and put to discussion with non-governmental partners an Action Plan focused on two main challenges: **more efficient management of public resources and improved corporate responsibility.**

Why have we decided to enhance our efforts for more efficient management of public resources?

The way public funds are spent is a key issue of public importance. The transparency and accountability of public authorities is the first step to more efficient public funds spending.

Why have we selected improving corporate responsibility as our priority?

The reason is that the administration and companies could cooperate to solve issues of key importance to our country, such as environmental and consumer protection.

The commitments in the action plan are targeted in the following main directions:

- More efficient management of public resources through improving the transparency of public spending, funding non-governmental organisations and natural resource management
- Improving corporate responsibility, outsourcing more functions to business, promoting corporate social responsibility and environmental protection
- Improving the conditions for implementation of the open government principles – improved transparency and better consumer protection in crucial areas such as healthcare through development of e-government, which will also contribute to higher transparency and efficiency in the operation of government institutions.



III. ACTION PLAN DELIVERY

The Action Plan of the Republic of Bulgaria for Delivery on the Commitments under the Open Government Partnership has been in effect since April 2012. In cooperation with the non-governmental sector, the Bulgarian Government has identified measures to deliver on the commitments made. The institutions in charge, the time limits and the relevant indicators have been established.

The general coordination and communication related to the Delivery of the Action Plan take place interactively on the Public Consultations Portal <http://www.strategy.bg/Articles/List.aspx?lang=bg-BG>.

To deliver on the commitment to achieving increased budget transparency, two new strategic papers and a package of amendments and supplements to the budget legislation have been adopted over the past year. All these instruments have been coordinated with the non-governmental sector and with citizens. The improved regulatory framework creates the required conditions for transparent, sustainable and more efficient management of public funds. To meet citizens' expectations of transparency and information accessibility, the institutions regularly publish on their websites current data on their expenditures.

The Government has undertaken legislative changes to introduce a mandatory impact assessment of legislative acts. This step creates conditions for improved accountability and transparency in the operation of institutions and the administration in drafting legislative acts.

Amendments and supplements to the Public Procurement Act have been drafted, aiming at full transparency and control in the tendering and performance of contracts and facilitating small and medium enterprises' access to the public procurement market.

The introduction of e-government is a priority in state governance. Over the past year, a package of projects has been underway, which is to give an impetus to e-government. Special attention is paid to e-health. The introduction of patients' e-files was launched in April 2013. A system for enhanced coordination and integration throughout the health service chain and for health data exchange is currently being introduced.

The Ministry of Economy and Energy has initiated the development of a new Mining Industry Development Strategy and a new Mineral Resources Act, which will guarantee transparency in mineral resource management. The drafts are being extensively discussed between the Government, trade associations, the non-governmental sector and citizens in a working group format and in the form of online consultations.

The dialogue between institutions, social partners, the non-governmental sector and citizens' movements is a priority in the Government's operations. During the second half of 2013, the active operations of the National Tripartite Cooperation Council, a body for consultations and debate between the Government, employers and trade unions, was restored. A Public Council headed by the relevant minister operates under each Ministry. Trade associations, non-governmental organisations and citizens' associations are involved in these Councils. More than 50 (ad hoc) working groups work on topical issues, with the active participation of business and citizens.

Current status of the commitments made by the Republic of Bulgaria

Commitment	Accountable Institution	Commitment Deadline	Status
More efficient public resource management			
Achieving increased budget transparency	Ministry of Finance	2012	Completed
More efficient mineral resource management	Ministry of Economy and Energy	2013	In progress
Improved corporate responsibility			
Performing impact assessment of legislative acts	All ministries	2013	In progress
Outsourcing public activities from the state to business	Council of Ministers	2013	In progress
Organising discussion forums at a national and local level to promote the opportunities for corporate social responsibility	Ministry of Economy and Energy; Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	2013	Completed
Promoting the observance of environmental legislation	Ministry of Economy and Energy; Ministry of Labour and Social Policy;	2013	In progress



Accountability and transparency of the operation of health service providers	Ministry of Health; National Health Insurance Fund	2013	In progress
Improving the conditions for implementation of the open government principles			
Development of e-government	Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications	2013	In progress
Development of e-health	Ministry of Health; Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications	2013	In progress
The Council of Ministers – a model of open administration	Administration of the Council of Ministers	2013	Completed
Enhancing the scope of good practices related to information access	Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications	2013	In progress

IV. CONCLUSION AND FURTHER STEPS

Bulgaria's commitments to the Open Government Partnership Global Initiative are in line with the Bulgarian society's expectations of government openness and accountability. The Global Initiative ensures continuity and consistence in the conduct of the indispensable dialogue between the State and civil society.

The membership requirements were fulfilled during the first year of our country's participation in the initiative: an Action Plan was drafted, along with an Operational Plan and a First-Year Report. Regardless of the results achieved (*Public Councils established under all government institutions, such as ministries, independent committees, regional administrations etc., which act in an advisory capacity and are actively involved in shaping sector policies; the work of ad hoc working groups on topical issues, with business representatives' participation; joint operation of the institutions, business and environmental organisations for sustainable utilisation and environment, etc.*, Bulgaria is still facing a number of challenges related to its participation in the Open Government Partnership. No sufficiently proactive steps have been undertaken yet to promote the ideas of the open government initiative in society. The criteria for drawing the non-governmental sector into working on the measures defined in the Action Plan have yet to be refined.



The Government reaffirms its will for openness and transparency in governance. In 2014, an information campaign will be conducted to promote the concept of open government with the participation of citizens. A second Operational Action Plan is to be drafted with the active involvement of the non-governmental sector. The aim is to upgrade the commitments made and to develop measures to reinforce the rule of law in combating corruption and standing up for democratic principles in Bulgaria.

Self-Assessment of the Delivery on the Action Plan under the Open Government Partnership Global Initiative

1. ACHIEVING INCREASED BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

In 2012, a **Government Debt Management Strategy for the 2012-2014 Period** was adopted, which was updated twice in 2013. The strategy ensures that the public is aware of important aspects of the government debt management process. The strategy is updated on an annual basis in accordance with the mid-term budget outlook. This makes it possible for citizens to get informed on the current strategic guidelines in government debt management and guarantee the predictability and publicity of the policies pursued.

The Ministry of Finance publishes the monthly Government Debt newsletter and an annual Government Debt newsletter, both containing current information on not only the government debt position and dynamics but also the government-guaranteed and the consolidated government debt. At the same time the Ministry of Finance supports on its website information of various scope and content on current government debt management, the regulatory framework and the strategic documents in this field aiming at improving transparency, openness and access to debt information by a virtually unlimited group of potential users.

In 2012, the **Strategy Supporting the Development of Citizens' Organisations in Bulgaria for the 2012-2015 Period** was adopted, along with a Vision of the Establishment of a Mechanism to Fund the Civil Sector. The strategy ensures better transparency in the spending of budgetary funds earmarked for non-governmental organisations.

In early 2013, the **Public Finance Act** was adopted, to take effect as of 01.01.2014. The Act introduces mechanisms to regulate the public finance management system, enhance the fiscal consolidation through improving the budget framework, and turn the mid-term budget framework into a genuine mid-term forecasting and planning tool, through the implementation by central and local authorities of strict fiscal rules and through long-term regulation of the relations connected with the development and reporting of a programme-format budget.

The budget procedure applied in the drafting of the 2014 Budget has ensured the required transparency and coordination with budgetary organisations in defining the priority policies and the mechanisms to fund them. The budget framework has been developed in line with the principles of dialogue and cooperation with the National Tripartite Cooperation Council and with other non-governmental organisations and associations.

The Ministry of Finance publishes the special **Budget for Citizens** newsletter, which contains a brief and accessible description of the changes made in the annual budget as regards the funding of policies important to citizens.

The newsletter improves budget transparency, openness and accessibility for citizens, and thus contributes to improving the efficiency of public resource management.

The institutions publish their financial statements and the reports on the implementation of their programmes on their websites on a regular basis. The Inspectorate-General under the Council of Ministers supervises the observance of this requirement and publishes the results of the conducted inspections on the website of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Committee.

The Ministry of Finance publishes on its website yearly tax expenditure reports. The first tax expenditure report was drafted in 2011 and covered the 2007-2009 period.

On the one hand, the drafting of tax expenditure reports improves public finance transparency, and on the other hand it raises awareness of the system of tax benefits in Bulgaria and their value.

The report covers tax expenditures by types of tax measures (benefits) related to value added tax, excise duties, corporate income tax and personal income tax.

Information on revenue from tax assessments based on tax audits performed is published on the website of the National Revenue Agency (NRA) on a regular basis. The State thus ensures publicity and transparency through awareness, subject to the requirements of the applicable legislation on safeguarding tax and social security information and other information protected by law.

An electronic system allowing access to the services provided by the NRA has been developed. As of 1 September 2013, the e-mail notification service in relation to tax and social security payments received into the NRA's accounts has been in operation.

As of July 2013, with a view to improving the efficiency of the VAT refund process and achieving increased budget transparency, the Ministry of Finance has undertaken an urgent step to establish strict VAT refund accountability, which includes:

- Strict observance of the statutory VAT refund time limits to avoid retaining companies' operating funds and paying default interest out of the national budget
- Introduction of the principle of refunding VAT in the sequence of submission of the VAT returns requests involving refundable VAT
- Monthly analysis of the structure of non-refunded VAT and the reasons for its non-refundability
- Day-to-day supervision of the VAT refund process
- Publishing monthly information on the VAT refunded during the relevant month.

In the second half of 2013, the Draft Bill to Amend and Supplement the 2013 Government Budget Act and the Draft Bill to Amend and Supplement the Tax and Social Security Procedure Code were discussed in active dialogue with representatives of the nationally represented employers' and employee organisations.

Status of the commitment: delivered

Assessment:

Thanks to the measures the Bulgarian Government undertook in 2012 and 2013, it has managed to improve the transparency of the budget process. The relevant draft strategies and bills were subjected to preliminary consultations with stakeholders, including the non-governmental sector, through public discussions.

The Government regularly publishes information on the Republic of Bulgaria's government budget (reports and statements, overviews and analyses, legislative acts), the budget process and methodology, as well as the budget reform.

To deliver on the commitment to increased budget transparency, a sustainable practice of transparency and accountability in the development and implementation of the government budget has been introduced.

2. MORE EFFICIENT NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

A new **Mineral Resources Bill** has been drafted, which introduces good practices of mineral resource management, including in terms of the transparency of the procedures of granting rights to manage such resources. The draft bill is currently subject to public discussion wherein citizens, trade associations and non-governmental organisations are involved.

An **Ordinance on the Requirements to the Scope and Content of Work Plans for Mineral Resource Prospecting and Exploration** has been adopted under the Mineral Resources Act to guarantee the observance of the Work Safety Rules in the Development of Mineral Resources.

A **draft National Mining Industry Development Strategy** has been developed. The strategy is to promote cooperation between local communities, business, the administration and non-governmental organisations in the management of mineral resources. The Draft Strategy is based on the commitment to establish and implement mechanisms promoting the cooperation between local communities, investors, the administration and non-governmental organisations, and to provide the required institutional framework and the conditions to improve the coordination and planning by the various institutions in terms of the mineral resources framework policy.

The strategy is currently being publicly discussed with business, the non-governmental sector, representatives of municipalities and citizens.

A **Register of Permits to Prospect for and Explore Mineral Resources and a Register of Mineral Resource Development Concessions Granted** are published on the website of the Ministry of Economy and Energy, the information therein being updated by experts on a monthly basis.

A Specialised Information System for Administration of data on mineral resources, permits issued to prospect and explore, and development concessions is currently considered for approval within the Administrative Capacity Operational Programme. The System is to be introduced in 2015.



Control over the use of natural resources has been enhanced through overall analysis and supervision of the performance of the concession contracts currently in effect. Concession fee collection rates have been increased over a short period.

Status of the commitment: in progress

Assessment:

In 2012 and 2013, the Government undertook important steps to increase the efficiency of natural resource management, a field which is in the centre of public attention and has major implications, especially for certain regions in Bulgaria.

The regulatory and strategic frameworks for more transparent and efficient mineral resource management are currently being developed. The next steps on our way to more efficient natural resource management are yet to be determined in Bulgaria's new Operational Plan.

3. PERFORMING IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF LEGISLATIVE ACTS

A **Draft Bill to Amend and Supplement the Legislative Acts Act** has been developed, introducing mandatory impact assessment of all legislative acts. The changes proposed are targeted into two main directions:

regulating the performance of impact assessment of legislative acts and expanding the scope of the principle of openness and coordination of the Executive's regulatory process.

The draft legislative acts, their reasoning and the reports enclosed therewith, as well as the reports on public discussions, are published on the Public Consultations Portal under the Council of Ministers at www.strategy.bg.

This measure improves the opportunities available to citizens and stakeholders to get informed in due time and state their opinions on draft legislative acts developed by the Executive.

A draft SME test has been developed and published for public discussion, according to which draft legislative acts should include an assessment of their impact on small and medium sized-enterprises. The process of regulating the SME test is currently being prepared through amending the Legislative Acts Act. The application of SME tests is a key tool to improve the business environment.

Status of the commitment: in progress

Assessment:

The introduction of mandatory impact assessment of legislative acts is an entirely new stage

in the legislative process, which creates conditions for improved responsibility of the administration in respect of the outside environment. The administration will in the future be required to perform assessments of the impact of draft legislative acts on business activity and employment. Their adequacy will be controlled centrally by the administration of the Council of Ministers.

The regulatory framework currently being established is a prerequisite for the sustainable performance of this commitment in the long run.

4. OUTSOURCING PUBLIC ACTIVITIES FROM THE STATE TO BUSINESS

With a view to improving corporate responsibility and promoting citizens' involvement in government, good self-regulation practices of professional chambers have been put to discussion.

Within the policy development process, including the assessment of the possibilities to outsource activities from the State to business, the Government proceeds in dialogue with the business and the non-governmental sectors. In the second half of 2013, Public Councils actively operated under all ministries, headed by ministers. More than 50 working groups on topical issues were established, involving non-governmental organisations, citizens' associations and business.

Status of the commitment: in progress

Assessment:

In Bulgaria, the process of outsourcing activities from the State to business is in its initial stage. Some regulatory competences have been delegated to trade associations, such as the Chamber of Architects, the Chamber of Engineers in Investment Design, etc. Practice has shown that the outsourcing of powers from the State to business does not always bring about regulatory relief. The process will therefore continue after the outcomes of the activities are analysed.

5. ORGANISING CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FORUMS

In 2013 the Government launched the initiative of a municipal-level **annual ranking of the enterprises showing the highest level of responsibility in their corporate behaviour.**

In 2012 and 2013 the Ministry of Economy and Energy and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy organised **workshops on corporate social responsibility (CSR)**. Social partners from more than 80 employers' and trade union organisations took part therein.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy currently performs the **project "Promoting Social Dialogue and Improving Working Conditions for Workers and Other Employees"**. The following activities are planned to be performed by the end of 2015 under that project:



analysis of the Bulgarian legislation in the CSR context; assessment of public CSR policies in Bulgaria; exploring CSR good practices; drafting CSR terms of reference for the public and private sectors.

The Government works in dialogue with employers' organisations, trade unions, non-governmental organisations and citizens' associations in the field of employment, policies on disabled persons and working conditions. The Public Council under the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, the National Advisory Board on Workforce Vocational Qualification, and the National Employment Promotion Council work actively.

In 2013, amendments and supplements to the Investment Promotion Act were adopted, which introduced a new promotional measure involving **financial aid in the form of partial refunds, for a certain period, of the mandatory social security contributions paid by investors in respect of workers and other employees recruited to fill in the new jobs opened.**

Status of the commitment: in progress

Assessment:

The Government has undertaken measures to raise awareness and encourage enterprises to act responsibly for the development of local communities and for environmental protection. By the end of 2013, workshops on the implementation of the Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy and the activities expected in the future are planned.

The State's policy in the field of education and vocational training is also relevant to CSR, in terms of encouraging vocational training and the development of educational and training programmes in line with the needs of the labour market.

6. ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY OF THE OPERATION OF HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS

A **project to improve health services through the implementation of innovative technologies to optimise process performance in the healthcare system at all levels** was launched in 2011. The project's objectives include:

- Improving the capacity of institutions in the healthcare system through their integration in a national health information system
- Improving the efficiency of the healthcare system, including medical services, through the implementation of new cost optimisation technologies
- Making health services more accessible through communication and information exchange.

Status of the commitment: in progress

Assessment:

Using modern information and communication technologies covering the whole healthcare system, from preventive medicine and diagnostics to completion of treatment, health services will be improved at all levels.

*The **health services improvement** project is a priority to the Bulgarian Government. It is to be implemented during the new programming period, 2014-2020.*

7. INTEGRATING THE PREVENTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL TOOLS INTO CORPORATE POLICIES BY INCREASING CORPORATE AWARENESS

An **Information Office** operates under The Ministry of Environment and Water, which **supports industry, in particular small and medium sized-enterprises, in the application of the statutory requirements in the field of chemicals management.**

To raise the business community's awareness of sustainable production models, the **EU's voluntary environmental management tools are promoted: *the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) and the Eco-Labeling Scheme***, along with support for industry in the application of statutory requirements in the field of environmental responsibility, comprehensive permits and chemicals management through guidelines, opinions, methodology documents, working meetings, workshops and training sessions.

To optimise public access to the services and information provided by environmental monitoring information systems, **public access to more than 220 registries and databases has been secured.**

To improve the quality and transparency of the decision-making process nationally and locally and with a view to the more comprehensive consideration of environmental factors in the development and implementation of sector strategies, plans, programmes and projects, **business representatives, trade associations and environmental civil groups are included in the advisory bodies and working groups under the Ministry of Environment and Water.**

Business and administration representatives take part in various **forums** to present the national and supranational statutory requirements in the field of environment and to encourage business to implement environmental management systems.

Amendments have been made to the Environmental Protection Act, which have optimised public access and publicity, coordination and the relations between stakeholders in the procedures of Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (EA).

The **National Action Plan to Promote the Production of Environment-Friendly Vehicles** was adopted in June 2013.

Amendments to the Local Taxes and Fees Act introduced in 2013 a special provision **exempting electric vehicles from vehicle tax.**



To promote good practices in the field of environmental protection, **honorary Greenest Business and Most Active Municipality prizes** have been awarded over the past three years within the Green Bulgaria National Campaign. To date, for the 2011-2013 period, a total of 20 prizes in the Greenest Business category have been awarded to various companies in three categories: big business, medium and small business and special awards.

Status of the commitment: in progress

Assessment:

Environmental protection is a commitment whose delivery requires maximum coordination and consensus among all stakeholders in the system: government, business and citizens. This is an ongoing process.

Within the first stage, the Government makes a commitment to ensure a long-term, efficient and predictable policy framework, which is a prerequisite for better involvement of business and citizens. Involving business representatives and environmental protection organisations in the decision making process is the correct approach to sustainability and consistence in pursuance of environmental protection policies.

8. DEVELOPMENT OF E-GOVERNMENT

A **standard and compatible information and communication environment for improved administrative services** and introduction of electronic administrative services for citizens and business is being created.

The Unified Portal for Access to Electronic Administrative Services has been upgraded with the features of the **Unified Contact Point**. In addition, an **internal e-government portal** has been developed.

An **interoperability management and monitoring and information security system** has been developed.

To guarantee uninterrupted availability, reliability, performance, security and accountability of the available integrated system solutions securing the interaction between the Automated Information Systems and the centralised provision of e-services, measures are implemented to **secure the operational support of the e-government Unified Portal for Access to Electronic Administrative Services and the Interoperability Registers** (Register of Registries and Data, Register of E-Services and Register of Information Points, Register of Standards, List of Accredited Persons and List of Certified Systems and Products).

This establishes conditions for more efficient public government through:

- daily operational monitoring and support of the system's operation
- operational support of the system's software components;

- ensuring reliable and uninterrupted availability to users
- management and storage of the information system's data
- guaranteeing the system's information security.

In August 2013, the **Unified Electronic Communications Network** was commissioned for the needs of the government administration and national security. It makes it possible to virtually combine in a unified national information infrastructure the networks of the ministries, departments and local administration units while preserving their informational independence and their autonomous management and shutting out all forms of unauthorised access to the information being transferred.

A project to set up optical fibre connectivity of the remote municipal centres has been launched to **cover the territory of Bulgaria with free-access Internet connectivity at public places**. The project's main goal is to set up a critical, protected, secure and reliable next-generation broadband infrastructure for the needs of e-government and to create the prerequisites for development of broadband services for citizens and business in economically backward and remote regions of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The Ministry of Interior, jointly with private sector e-service providers, is currently developing a project to **implement restricted access to websites with content inappropriate for children**.

The electronic identification service has been developed. 5000 pilot e-ID cards have been issued. These are special media whereon individuals can store an electronic identity certificate. This service will promote the use of e-services.

With a view to e-health development and public access to all e-services, the **Personalised Information System / Patient's File** was launched in the beginning of April 2013. Citizens are provided with access to their health data through a unique code.

Rules have been developed in the field of information technology and services, planning, organising and coordinating the exploration and implementation of new applications and hardware to computerise the business processes in the structure, operation and management of the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) and of health and dental service providers.

Policies and procedures for efficient and effective use of software and hardware resources have been developed, which also involve improving the IT skills and qualifications of the NHIF's employees.

A process of interoperability and integration of the information systems, software and hardware infrastructure used has been carried out.

Technical and semantic issues have been solved to provide for better coordination and integration throughout the chain of health services and health data exchange. Standardised information models have been introduced.

Status of the commitment: in progress

Assessment:

Introducing e-government is a comprehensive process involving horizontal coordination of the whole administration. It is crucial to automate the operation of the different areas of the administration through information systems, implementation of entirely electronic registry and archive operations, and interdepartmental communications.

For instance, setting up e-government is a commitment that has been partially delivered. This is a process requiring substantial investment. In addition, a high level of coordination between the administration units at the central and local level is required in order to achieve interoperability of their information systems, which is a key precondition for the establishment of a unified e-government architecture.

E-government remains a priority of paramount importance to the Bulgarian Government in 2014.

9. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS – A MODEL OF OPEN ADMINISTRATION

The Government's website has been developed to increase the transparency in the operation of the Council of Ministers and its administration. Major innovations include the publication of daily reports on the payments made by the administration of the Council of Ministers, details of all public procurement procedures, and succinct and accessible information on the decisions passed by the Council of Ministers.

The Government's website (www.government.bg) now gives citizens and business the opportunity to make proposals and state their opinions on the measures to be undertaken by the Government to improve the business environment and citizens' social status and to reinforce the rule of law as a basis for extensive public discussion.

The publicity of the budget process, the financial results and the performance reports of the administration of the Council of Ministers and the second-level spending units in its system has been ensured.

In line with statutory time limits, periodic financial statements and reports on the degree of implementation of the Council of Ministers' policies and programmes are published on the Council of Ministers' website. The audited annual financial statements and cash report of the Council of Ministers are also published, along with the Audit Office's audit report. The structure of the Council of Ministers' programme budget gives a sufficiently clear picture of the second-level spending units within its structure and their financial results and performance reports. The internal rules/procedures regulating the operation of regional administrations (rules under the Public Information Access Act, rules on dealing with warnings and suggestions, disposing of state-owned real estate, etc.) as endorsed by regional governors are published on regional administrations' websites.

A summary of the results of the inspections performed by the Inspectorate-General and by the Inspectorates under the Administration Act features in the reports on the implementation of the measures included in the Action Plans under the Integrated Corruption and Organised Crime Prevention and Combating Strategy.



In 2008, the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria set up the Public Consultations Portal (www.strategy.bg) aiming to promote the involvement of citizens, the non-governmental sector and business in the decision-making process. In 2012 the portal provided the platform for the public consultations on Bulgaria's action plan under the Open Government Partnership. The portal has been improved through new features to facilitate citizens' participation in the decision-making process.

An information system for monitoring the resources from the EU funds is in operation. In 2012 the Government took steps to encourage the public to use the information contained therein through providing a possibility for easy data export.

Status of the commitment: delivered

Assessment:

The commitment to turn the administration of the Council of Ministers into a model of openness has been delivered. The efforts in this direction will be followed up mainly through promoting the implementation of modern technology and the development of e-government.

10. ENHANCING THE SCOPE OF GOOD PRACTICES RELATED TO INFORMATION ACCESS

An amendment to the Public Information Access Act is currently being prepared in order to introduce unified standards on the preparation and publication of information by all units of the administration.

Status of the commitment: in progress

Assessment:

This commitment has not yet been delivered, as the draft bill to amend and supplement the Act has not yet been passed. The internal consultations on the future standards of access to public information continue. This commitment will be delivered after 2014.