



END-OF-TERM SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT
on the Action Plan for Implementation of Open Government Partnership Initiative
in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2018-2020

December 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

Open Government Partnership¹ (hereinafter referred to as: OGP) is an international initiative aimed at enlisting support and ensuring higher involvement of governments across the world to promote integrity, transparency, efficiency and accountability of public administration by building public trust, cooperating with civil society organisations (hereinafter referred to as: CSOs), empowering citizens to participate in governance, combating corruption, enabling access to information and harnessing new technologies.

Founded in 2011 by eight countries, OGP now has 78 member states and 20 local self-governments worldwide which together with thousands CSOs undertake steps to improve the main open government values.²

After meeting the minimum requirements for participation, and submitting the Letter of Intent,³ the Republic of Serbia joined this initiative in 2012, assuming the duty to respect the open government principles enshrined in the OGP Declaration⁴ and to undertake activities to improve them through preparation of two-year action plans. The development and implementation of the action plan is the most important element of country's participation in the OGP, considering that the



country expresses its commitment to the core values of the Partnership through this. These action plans are also a strong instrument for improvement of the existing situation in the fields covered by the key OGP values, because they consist of ambitious and specific commitments the implementation of which ensures achievement of the open government principles. Finally, the Partnership has been globally recognised as the platform for a dialogue between governments and CSOs, businesses and citizens, through which their needs are recognised and measures undertaken to satisfy them.

To date, the Republic of Serbia has developed four action plans, in 2013, 2014, 2016 and 2018, but during adoption of the Action Plan for 2013 it was concluded that it needed to be improved, so it was never officially presented to the OGP; instead, preparation of a new, improved action plan was initiated. In accordance with this, Action Plan for Implementation of the Open Government Partnership in the Republic of Serbia for 2014 and 2015 is considered to be the first action plan, while Action Plan for the period 2018-2020, reviewed in this Report, is the third action plan.⁵

¹ <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/>

² <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/our-members/>

³ The Government's Conclusion 05 No. 05 345-03-1758/2012 of 16 March 2012

⁴ <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/process/joining-ogp/open-government-declaration/> (English); <http://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/deklaracija-ogp.doc?script=lat> (Serbian)

⁵ All action plans are available at: <http://mduls.gov.rs/uprava-po-meri-svih-nas/strateska-dokumenta/>.



In recent years, the Republic of Serbia has been making efforts to transform its public administration into a transparent, inclusive and citizen-focused administration. These reform processes are driven both by external factors, namely EU membership as a priority of the country's foreign policy, and by national policies aimed at building a modern state and a society based on modern standards. This has created a strong impetus for reforms in recent years, which, on the one hand, reflects the EU's enlargement strategy for the Western Balkans⁶, which identifies public administration reform as one of the three pillars of the accession process, together with the rule of law and economic governance, while on the other hand it reflects the country's own monitoring and evaluation of the results achieved in public administration reform, as reflected specifically in the first External Evaluation of the Public Administration Reform Strategy conducted in 2018 and 2019.⁷

In view of the foregoing, participation in the OGP and activities undertaken within it have a very important role in and contribute significantly to the overall public administration reform process in the Republic of Serbia. Those are two complementary processes, based on joint values and aimed at the same objectives, supporting and complementing each other. The principles on which this Initiative is based are in accordance with the Serbian Government's commitment to build a new administration based on the general principles of "good governance" and "open government", i.e. to ensure full implementation of the rule of law and legal certainty, transparency, accountability, cost-effectiveness and efficiency. In addition, national OGP processes are characterised by an intensive dialogue with various actors, primarily with civil society, which additionally contributes to objective review of the situation with the reforms, recognition of challenges and manners to overcome them in partnership with CSOs. Finally, taking into account that the Partnership is also an international forum for dialogue and exchange of experiences between governments, CSOs and the private sector, ongoing cooperation with other participants in the Initiative is an additional instrument for evaluation of own results, and to learn from experiences of others.

In terms of the commitments assumed under the action plans adopted to date, participation in the OGP has significantly contributed to improvements in the legislative framework in specific areas, such as public participation in decision-making or funding of CSOs from budget funds,⁸ but it has also been a driving force for the issues such as digitalisation of public services and open data. By positioning digitalisation of public administration and open data high on the list of public administration reform priorities, the Government of the Republic of Serbia has put a strong emphasis on the use of modern technologies and innovation as a specific value of the OGP.

Regarding the Action Plan covered by this Report, it is important to note that it ensures continuity of commitment to improving the situation across different areas of OGP and continues the trend of improving cooperation with the civil society, coupled with notable progress in engaging with and involving local self-governments in OGP-related activities.

⁶ A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credible-enlargement-perspective-western-balkans_en.pdf

⁷ External Evaluation of the Public Administration Reform Strategy, <https://monitoring.mduls.gov.rs/downloadFile/?id=11053&type=doc>

⁸ See commitments 5, 10 and 12 under Action Plan for 2016 and 2017.

2. ACTION PLAN PROCESS

The Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Action Plan for Implementation of Open Government Partnership Initiative in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2018-2020 (hereinafter referred to as: Action Plan) on its session held on 27 December 2017. The proponent of the Action Plan was the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government (hereinafter referred to as: MPALSG), which continued to perform the role of the coordinator of Serbia's participation in the OGP and the national point of contact also in this cycle of the Action Plan.

The Action plan contains a total of 15 commitments classified by the following fields: open data/fiscal transparency (since the majority of commitments within the Open Data field relate to fiscal transparency, these two fields were merged into one), government's integrity, public services, access to information and citizens' participation.

15 COMMITMENTS – 5 FIELDS

- ✓ Open data/fiscal transparency
- ✓ Government's integrity
- ✓ Public services
- ✓ Access to information
- ✓ Citizens' participation

* * * * *

AP OGP 2018-2020

2A. Participation and Co-creation throughout the OGP Cycle

Within the third cycle, which covers the period of preparation and implementation of the Action Plan for the period 2018-2020, the Republic of Serbia continued to improve all aspects of its participation in the OGP – availability and dissemination of information on OGP and national activities, spaces and platforms for dialogue and co-creation, as well as co-ownership and joint decision-making. Guided by the OGP standards for participation and co-creation⁹ and recommendations of the Independent Reporting Mechanism (hereinafter referred to as: IRM), we have made additional efforts to raise the awareness of the public, as well as of other authorities, of the OGP and the activities it comprises; we have continued cooperating with the civil society; and, crucially, we have made significant progress towards including local self-governments in national OGP activities and promoted the principles and values of open government at the local level.

As regards **provision of information to the public and dissemination of information on OGP activities**, the third cycle saw increased diversification of communication channels in order to reach as many stakeholders as possible; steps were taken to ensure simpler and more user-friendly access for citizens and emphasis was placed on providing information to local self-governments and CSOs active in local communities.

The central point for publishing all relevant information, including all calls, notices, news and documents created in the process of Action plan drafting and implementation, was the OGP platform www.ogp.rs, which

⁹ For more information, see the OGP Participation & Co-Creation Standards which are available at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-participation-co-creation-standards/>.

complies with the OGP standard as regards visibility, accessibility and searchability. Unlike the previous cycle, when this platform had been established and maintained by the CSO CRTA, with support and cooperation from the MPALSG, in the third cycle the platform was managed by the CSO Civic Initiatives, also in cooperation with the MPALSG. To monitor the entire cycle, the platform featured a dedicated section addressing the Action Plan for 2018-2020, to which all relevant documents were uploaded on a regular basis and which serves as an open government repository, in accordance with the OGP standards.¹⁰

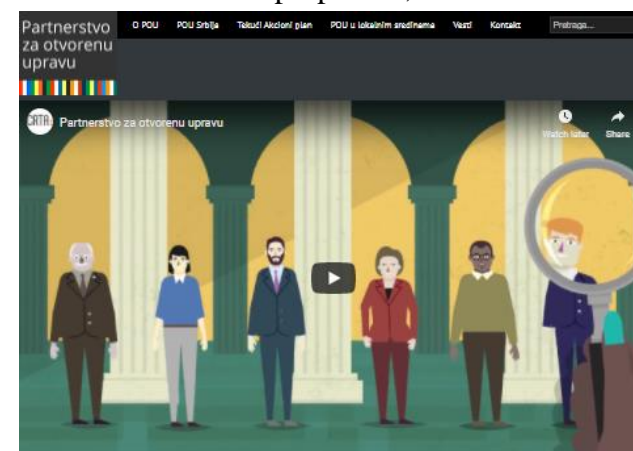
This section contains the Decision on the Formation of the Special Interministerial Working Group on the Development of the Third Action Plan for 2018-2020 and Participation of the Republic of Serbia in the Open Government Partnership Initiative (hereinafter referred to as; Working Group), its Rules of Procedure, minutes of all Working Group meetings (both full meetings and core group meetings), reports of consultations, instructions and forms relating to action plan development, self-assessment reports, IRM recommendations and a calendar of planned activities with a tentative timeframe for their implementation. The platform also contains information on the institution responsible for implementing the OGP Initiative in the Republic of Serbia and the point of contact.¹¹

In addition, all information, documents and public calls relating to OGP implementation are published on the MPALSG website on a regular basis.¹² Significant support to dissemination of information in this cycle

was provided by the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society (hereinafter referred to as: OCCS) and Civic Initiatives, who published on their websites all public calls for interested parties, together with accompanying documentation, and sent direct calls to CSOs via their mailing lists.

All proposals by CSOs, as well as feedback on their acceptance and incorporation in the Action Plan or reasons for not incorporating them in the Action Plan, were published as part of minutes of Working Group meetings. Thus, the minutes allowed for monitoring of Action Plan development, including consideration and decision-making on the proposed commitments.

Furthermore, once decisions had been made pursuant to all proposals and a Draft Action Plan had been developed, a Repository of Commitments was established to provide an overview of all proposed commitments, with information on the proponent, the aim of the commitment, the responsible institution, status (accepted/not accepted) and a statement of reasons if not accepted.¹³



¹⁰ <https://ogp.rs/akcioni-plan-2018-2020/>

¹¹ <https://ogp.rs/kontakt/>

¹² <http://mduls.gov.rs/uprava-po-meri-svih-nas/strateska-dokumenta/>

¹³ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-3QFFd-aWrWdsGkOA5D4XPC9V367yXjl/view?usp=sharing>



OGP STANDARDS ACHIEVED DURING THE 3rd CYCLE AND AP PREPARATION:

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

- ✓ There is a national web page ogp.rs on which all information has been published proactively
- ✓ Information on [the lead institution and the contact person](#) is publicly available
- ✓ There is a [repository](#) with all documents pertaining to the OGP cycle
- ✓ Information was published in advance during the OGP cycle
- ✓ Different channels of communication with the public were used
- ✓ Targeted communication with local communities was achieved during the cycle
- ✓ All proposed commitments with feedback are publicly available
- ✓ Different materials were used (visualisations, infographics, videos etc.) to familiarise citizens with the OGP activities

Furthermore, throughout the entire cycle, news was regularly published on the current or implemented activities under the national OGP cycle, other national efforts to achieve open government principles, as well as experiences of other countries participating in the Partnership.¹⁴ All relevant information was published in advance, to give stakeholders sufficient time to prepare for participation in all stages of OGP implementation. In this way, the public had an opportunity to keep up with and also participate in all activities undertaken as part of the OGP cycle, from its beginning to the final consultations before the adoption of the Action Plan.

To promote the Partnership and the activities undertaken as part of the third cycle, as well as to reach the wider public and promote its participation in the development, implementation and monitoring of the Action Plan, modern means of communication via the Facebook, Twitter¹⁵ and YouTube social networks were used, coupled with the use of audio-visual and similar materials. In this context, several animated videos promoting the Partnership were developed and posed on YouTube and the national OGP platform, focusing on the attainment of OGP values at the local level.¹⁶

As already noted, the focus of information and awareness-raising activities during the third OGP cycle was on local communities, i.e. local self-governments and CSOs active in local settings. In partnership with a CSO consortium supported by the OGP donor fund, numerous activities were undertaken to promote the values of open government and the Partnership at the local level, include these stakeholders in the development and monitoring of the Action Plan and help develop local action plans. These efforts resulted in the inclusion of local self-governments in the Working Group tasked with developing and monitoring the OGP Action Plan for 2018-2020, as well as in the development of several local action plans, which will be discussed in more detail below.

¹⁴ <https://ogp.rs/vesti/>

¹⁵ Information on activities within the third OGP cycle in the Republic of Serbia was also published on the Facebook and Twitter accounts of the MPALSG, the OCCS and Civic Initiatives.

¹⁶ Video materials are available on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekNY-y7z5Ek> , <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfwFu7cDanM>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3Kg3pkKy8> , <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5udUEWFQQa4> , <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tv7tCQAPIWc> , <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izVGBZ-Qte8>, and on the national OGP platform: <https://ogp.rs/video/>.

As regards the CSO consortium, in March 2018 the OGP donor fund issued a public call for support to the CSOs involved in the development of the Action Plan, to ensure its joint development is as effective as possible. The MPALSG supported two groups of CSOs which had applied to the public call, with funding awarded to the consortium led by Belgrade-based Civic Initiatives, while the remaining CSOs were: Transparency Serbia (Belgrade), Association of Online Media (Niš), People's Parliament (Leskovac), Education Centre (Leskovac) and Media and Reform Centre (Niš). These organisations significantly contributed to the coordination of involvement of civil and business sector stakeholders at national and local levels in the process of designing the Action Plan and coordinating the consultations with the civil society and other stakeholders during its development and during monitoring of its implementation.

The main **space and platform for dialogue and co-creation** during the third OGP cycle was the **Special Interministerial Working Group on the Development of the Third Action Plan for 2018-2020 and Participation of the Republic of Serbia in the Open Government Partnership Initiative** (hereinafter referred to as: Working Group); however, dialogue with all stakeholders also took place outside the Working Group, through consultations with the general public throughout the OGP cycle.

2B. Participation and Co-creation in Action Plan Development

The Action Plan preparation process officially began in March 2018, with the formation of the said Working Group as a **stakeholder forum**, in accordance with the OGP standards. The Working Group was tasked with: preparing a Draft Action Plan; holding consultations with the civil society; monitoring the implementation of the commitments and activities set out in the Action Plan and compliance with the established timeframe; proposing amendments and supplements to the Action Plan; and preparing interim and final reports on its implementation. The Working Group was comprised of 37 members and as many deputy members, representing multiple ministries, the Government's services, the Strategic Project Implementation Unit – IT and e-Government within the Prime Minister's Cabinet, special organisations, independent bodies, the National Assembly, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia, local self-governments and CSOs.



In a fair and transparent procedure based on a public call and predetermined criteria, **representatives of six CSOs were selected to the Working Group**. These are representatives of all CSOs that submitted applications pursuant to the public call, namely: Citizens' Association for Democracy and Civic Education "Civic Initiatives", Belgrade, Belgrade Open School (BOS), Belgrade, Centre for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), Belgrade, Media and Reform Centre, Niš, the Association of Online Media, Niš and the Association "People's Parliament", Leskovac.

As regards the CSO selection procedure, it began by the MPALSG issuing, in collaboration with the OCCS, a public call in December 2017 for all CSOs in the territory of the Republic of Serbia to apply for participation in the Working Group, which was published on the websites of the MPALSG¹⁷ and the OCCS,¹⁸ as well as on the national OGP platform.¹⁹ The call was also published on social networks and the OCCS e-mailed it to all CSOs on its mailing list. In addition to all relevant information and instructions for participation in the selection process, the public call also contained the CSO selection criteria. These criteria reflected the intention to involve in Working Group activities and Action Plan development those CSOs that were active in and had project experience and expertise in various fields covered by the OGP values: data accessibility, freedom of information, media and information, fiscal transparency, public advocacy and policies, strengthening the rule of law and raising civic awareness, fight against corruption, development of new technologies and innovation to exchange information, improve public services and involve citizens in decision-making, open data, public administration reform and the Open Government Partnership. As there are

more than 35,000 CSOs in the Republic of Serbia that are active in various fields (associations, endowments and foundations), it was necessary to establish the criteria in order to ensure efficiency of Working Group operations.

The public call was open from 22 December 2017 to 19 January 2018. Upon expiry of the final date for applying, completion of the selection procedure and expiry of the complaints period, a Commission comprised of representatives of the OCCS and the MPALSG passed a final decision on the selection of members and deputy members representing CSOs in the Working Group. A list of submitted applications, a ranking list and a Decision on the Proposed CSO Members of the Working Group are published on the MPALSG and OCCS websites.²⁰

To raise the awareness of open government values among local communities, as well as to incorporate the local perspective and identify needs at the level of government closest to citizens, in this cycle of Action Plan development the Working Group **involved in its work representatives of local self-governments**: the cities of Šabac and Novi Pazar, the municipalities of Ruma and Paraćin and the City Municipality of Vračar.

Overall, regarding the **composition of the Working Group**, it should be noted that it largely ensures continuity with the Working Group composition in the previous cycle of Action Plan development, which further reinforced efficiency in its operations and Serbia's overall participation in the OGP. Any changes of members were mainly due to staff changes in certain authorities.

¹⁷ Due to changes made on the official website of the MPALSG, link is currently unavailable.

¹⁸ <https://bit.ly/2D28JNs>

¹⁹ <https://ogp.rs/vesti/objavljen-javni-poziv-za-clanstvo-u-radnoj-grupi/>

²⁰ <https://www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs/vest/partnerstvo-za-otvorenu-upravu:-kona%C4%8Dna-odluka-o-izboru-ocd-u-posebnu-me%C4%91uministarssku-radnu-grupu-za-izradu-ap-20182020.37.html?newsId=912>

On the other hand, regarding civil society participation, although six CSOs had been selected according to the procedure described above, **the Working Group remained open to participation of all interested organisations throughout the entire cycle of Action Plan development and implementation.** Thus, Transparency Serbia from Belgrade and the Education Centre from Leskovac subsequently joined its activities as members of the CSO consortium supported by the OGP donor fund, although they had not formally participated in the public call for the selection of CSO members of the Working Group. Here it should be noted in particular that the Working Group included four CSOs based outside of the capital city (Media and Reform Centre, Niš; Association of Online Media; Niš, Association “People’s Parliament”, Leskovac; and Education Centre, Leskovac), which can be directly attributed to promotional activities and the efforts to bring the OGP closer to citizens and the public across all of Serbia. Moreover, this is a significant improvement over the previous cycle which related to the OGP Action Plan for 2016 and 2017, when the Working Group included only a single CSO based outside of Belgrade.²¹ Finally, throughout the entire cycle, the Working Group was open to written comments, proposals and suggestions, thus enabling both members and non-members to remotely participate in the OGP process when they were unable to attend Working Group meetings and other events that were organised.

As regards activities of the Working Group, at its very first meeting held on 30 March 2018, the Working Group adopted the **Rules of Procedure** which, in addition to the operating and decision-making rules, contains also rules on handover of membership in the event of staff

changes, in order to ensure continuity in Working Group operation. The Rules of Procedure are publicly available,²² which ensured the implementation of one of IRM’s key recommendations. Furthermore, at its first meeting the Working Group also determined modes of cooperation, steps in Action Plan development and a calendar of activities. Although most of the members had already been involved in the development of the previous Action Plan, at this meeting the members were reintroduced to the OGP initiative and its values, the instructions for action plan development, the purpose of the IRM and their recommendations for the current cycle of Action Plan development.

During the entire third cycle, the Working Group held **12 meetings in total**, eight of which were full meetings, while four were core group meetings. More precisely, there were eight meetings held in total as part of the Action Plan Development process in 2018: four full meetings of the Working Group (30 March, 26 April, 7 June and 9 October) and four core Working Group meetings to review specific proposals of commitments, which were attended by the proponents and the competent authorities (meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Culture on 25 June 2018, two meetings at the MPALSG, on 9 July and 22 August 2018, a meeting with representatives of the ITE on 30 August 2018). The practice of holding core Working Group meetings is one of the lessons learned from the previous cycles of action plan development; it has been introduced to improve the efficiency of proceedings of the Working Group, given the fact that its full composition includes many members, as well as to consider in greater detail specific topics and proposed commitments.

²¹ Members of the Working Group on the Development and Monitoring of the OGP Action Plan for 2016 and 2017 selected among CSOs were: Belgrade Open School (BOS), Centre for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), Civic Initiatives, Union of ICT Societies of

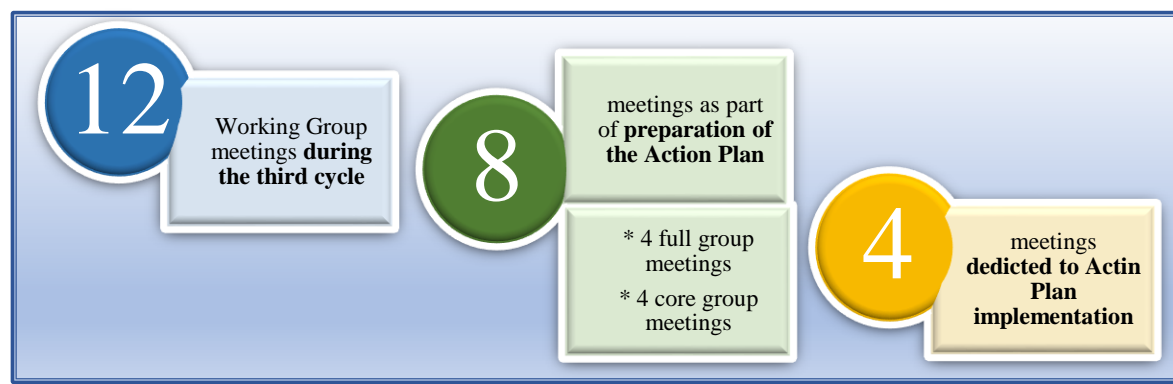
Serbia (JISA), Local Democracy Agency and Association of Business Women of Serbia, of which only the Local Democracy Agency is established outside of the capital, in Subotica.

²² <https://ogp.rs/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Poslovnik-o-radu-Me%C4%91uministarske-radne-grupe.pdf>

On the other hand, during the implementation of Action plan, as discussed in the next section of the Report, the Working Group held three meetings in 2019 to discuss the progress achieved in implementing the commitments set forth in the Action Plan. In addition, in its first meeting, the Working Group tasked with preparing the new OGP Action Plan for 2020-2022, held on 19 May 2020,²³ also discussed the progress in implementing the then-applicable Action Plan, which was implemented until 31 August 2020.

Minutes of all Working Group meetings were published on a regular basis, both on the MPALSG website²⁴ and on the national OGP page,²⁵ allowing for continual monitoring of the Action Plan development process.

The participation of all interested citizens, CSOs and other stakeholders outside the Working Group was enabled through a **continual consultative process, which took place from the earliest stage to the adoption of the Action Plan**. In the Republic of Serbia, the second cycle of action plan development already essentially began by consulting all interested CSOs. This enabled civil sector participation in this process **right from the start, when priorities are defined and when proposal of commitments for the Action Plan are determined**. In other words, participation and co-creation begin from the “white paper”, rather than from an already prepared working version or draft of an action plan.



Accordingly, initial consultations took place between 2 and 13 April 2018. On 13 April, the Working Group held a **consultative meeting /Round Table** with all interested CSOs, to identify priorities and collect proposals of commitments to be included in the Action Plan. Together with the public call for the meeting²⁶, the following documents were published: Instructions on Action Plan Development, Guide to OGP Values, IRM Recommendations, Consultative Meeting Agenda and forms to be used for defining proposed commitments and submitting proposals in writing. Apart from the Working Group members representing public administration bodies, the meeting was also attended by 27 civil sector representatives.

²³ Two more Working Group meetings were held by the end of the third OGP cycle, on 11 and 14 August 2020; however, they were dedicated to discussing proposed commitments for a new Action Plan for 2020-2022.

²⁴ <http://mduls.gov.rs/uprava-po-meri-svih-nas/strateska-dokumenta/>

²⁵ <https://ogp.rs/akcioni-plan-2018-2020/>

²⁶ A public call for the consultative meeting was published on 2 April on the national OGP platform <https://ogp.rs/vesti/konsultativni-sastanak-povodom-izrade-akcionog-plana/> and on the websites of the OCSG <https://www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs/%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%B7%D0%B8%D0%B2/%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%B7%D0%B8%D0%B2.76.html?invitationId=497> and the MPALSG (link currently unavailable due to changes on the MPALSG website).

In the introductory part of the meeting, all participants were introduced to the OGP initiative, its values, the method of preparing action plans and their structure, the IRM and all other facts relevant for Action Plan development. The participants were also introduced to the results of implementation of the second Action Plan, to ensure continuity. After the initial part of the meeting, the participants were assigned to groups tasked with addressing specific issues, where they proposed, considered and defined proposals of commitments that could be included in the third Action Plan. As a result of collaboration between Working Group members and CSO representatives, twenty proposals of commitments were collected at the meeting, addressing the following topics: Public Participation, Access to Information, Open Data, Government Integrity, Fiscal Transparency and Public Services. A report of the meeting, containing all proposals, was published on the national OGP platform,²⁷ as well as on the MPALSG and OCCS websites.²⁸ Apart from the meeting, during the consultations the interested public could also submit proposals of commitments and other comments in writing or by e-mail.

After the consultation process, all proposals made by CSOs were considered at Working Group meetings and jointly with the relevant state authorities whose mandate includes the proposed commitments. Most of the proposals were included in the Working Draft of the Action Plan, while for some proposals it was concluded, with the statement of reasons, that they cannot be implemented within this action plan. . The process of consideration of the commitments and substantiation of decisions to reject certain proposals is recorded in the minutes of Working Group meetings, as already stated above.

The process of consultation and Action Plan development was continued in October 2018 through **two consultative meetings: on 5 October in Niš and on 8 October in Šabac**. The meetings took place through collaboration between the MPALSG and the CSO consortium supported by the OGP donor fund. Calls for participation in these meetings were issued to all interested participants via the national OGP platform and the MPALSG and OCCS websites.²⁹ At the meetings, representatives of the Working Group presented proposals of commitments for the new Action Plan,

OGP STANDARDS ACHIEVED DURING THE 3rd CYCLE AND AP PREPARATION:

SPACES AND PLATFORMS FOR DIALOGUE AND CO-CREATION

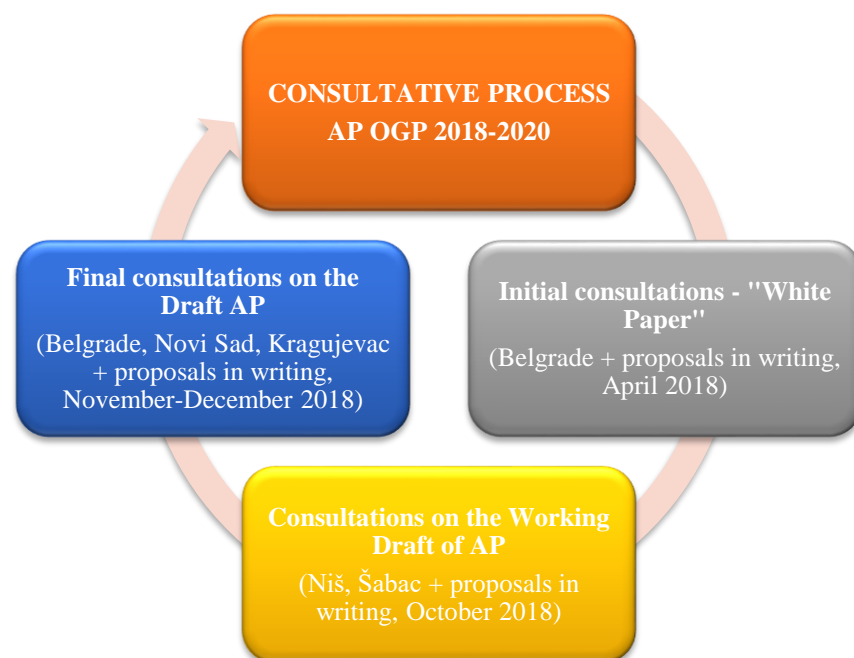
- ✓ A multi-stakeholder forum (Working Group) was formed and met on a regular basis
- ✓ In addition to the CSOs selected pursuant to the public call, CSOs which subsequently stated their interest were also involved
- ✓ 5 LSGs are part of the Working Group
- ✓ The Working Group actively disseminated information and raised awareness of the OGP process throughout the entire cycle
- ✓ The public was provided with all information necessary to participate in the OGP activities
- ✓ Minutes of all Working Group meetings are publicly available
- ✓ Public participation was enabled from the earliest stage to the development of a Draft AP through 6 consultative meetings and solicitation of proposals in writing
- ✓ Feedback on CSOs proposals was provided

²⁷ <https://ogp.rs/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Izve%C5%A1taj-sa-konsultativnog-sastanka-sa-OCD.docx>

²⁸ <https://www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs/vest/partnerstvo-za-otvorenu-upravu:-konsultativni-sastanak-sa-ocd-povodom-izrade-ap-20182020.37.html?newsId=931>

²⁹ The public call for the meeting in Niš is available at <https://ogp.rs/vesti/javni-poziv-za-ucescu-na-konsultativnom-sastanku-povodom-izrade-treceg-akcionog-plana-partnerstva-za-otvorenu-upravu-u-nisu/>, while the public call for the meeting in Šabac is available at <https://ogp.rs/vesti/poziv-za-drugi-sastanak-povodom-izrade-akcionog-plana-za-sprovođenje-inicijative-ogp/>.

while the participants had an opportunity to state their comments and suggestions. In addition, the meetings also provided an opportunity to present the OGP initiative as such and Serbia's result achieved to date under this initiative, with emphasis on the implementation of the previous Action Plan for 2016 and 2017, while the CSOs shared their experiences with participation in OGP activities. After these meetings, minutes containing all relevant information were published.³⁰



A working Draft Action Plan was published on 13 November 2018, together with an announcement of the final consultation, two weeks before their scheduled date.³¹ A call for participation in the consultations, with all materials, was reissued on the start date of the consultations, on 28 November, and the process lasted until 12 December 2018.³² The consultations included **three meetings – in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Kragujevac** – according to the schedule announced in advance, with the option of e-mailing comments in writing on the Draft Action Plan. After the consultations, the Report of Final Consultations was prepared and published³³ and the Action Plan Proposal was submitted to the Government for adoption in accordance with the Government's Rules of Procedure.

³⁰ Minutes of the meeting in Niš are available at https://ogp.rs/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/%D0%97%D0%B0%D0%BF%D0%B8%D1%81%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA-%D1%81%D0%B0-%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%D1%81%D1%83%D0%BB%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B3-%D1%81%D0%B0%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%BA%D0%B0-%D0%9D%D0%B8%D1%88_5_%D0%BE%D0%BA%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%B0%D1%80_2015.docx, while those of the meeting in Šabac are available at <https://ogp.rs/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Zapisnik-sa-konsultativnog-sastanka-sa-OCD-%C5%A0abac-8.-oktobar-2018.docx>.

³¹ <https://bit.ly/2H1Uyfw>.

³² <https://ogp.rs/vesti/javni-poziv-za-ucescu-u-finalnim-konsultacijama-povodom-izrade-akcionog-plana-za-sprovođenje-pou-inicijative-u-rs-2018-2020/>

³³ <https://ogp.rs/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Izve%C5%A1taj-%D0%BE-finalnim-konsultacijama.docx>



OGP STANDARDS ACHIEVED DURING THE 3rd CYCLE AND AP PREPARATION:

CO-OWNERSHIP AND JOINT DECISION-MAKING

- ✓ The multi-stakeholder forum (Working Group) gathers governmental and non-governmental stakeholders with different views
- ✓ CSOs selected in a fair and transparent procedure
- ✓ Most of the representatives of state authorities are heads of internal units
- ✓ Working Group proceedings are governed by the jointly agreed Rules of Procedure
- ✓ The Working Group decides by consensus
- ✓ The Working Group communicated to and informed the general public on a regular basis on its decisions and activities (minutes and reports of meetings and news of events were regularly published)
- ✓ Proposed commitments were considered in a transparent and open process
- ✓ Certain proposals were included in the AP after joint corrections by the CSOs and the competent authority
- ✓ Statement of reasons was provided for those proposals that were not included in the AP

As regards the OGP standards relating to **co-ownership and joint decision-making**, the Working Group gathered governmental and non-governmental stakeholders with different views and opinions, which were discussed in the forum. The representatives of the non-governmental sector were selected in a fair and transparent procedure aimed at selecting competent CSOs that would directly contribute with their experience and expertise and act as partners in the implementation of OGP activities. Furthermore, the Working Group was open to participation of other interested CSOs, both through attendance of its meetings and through other forms of communication, such as written contributions. As regards the representatives of state authorities and the Government, most of the forum members in the third cycle were civil servants managing organisational units whose purview is closely related to the values and principles of open government. Some of the members were appointed officials, usually at the rank of assistant line minister or secretary at a ministry, while the Working Group was chaired by the State Secretary at the MPALSG.

The mode of operation of the Working Group was agreed between all members and adopted in the form of the Rules of Procedure. Because of the large number of state authorities represented in the Working Group due to the fact that their mandate and purview are related to OGP values, it was not possible to ensure equal representation of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, as that would undermine the forum's efficiency. Nevertheless, this shortcoming was addressed by a provision of the Working Group's Rules of Procedure according to which all decisions within the Working Group are to be made by consensus, which precludes outvoting. In addition to communication within the Working Group, during the third cycle the forum also proactively communicated and informed the general public of its decisions, activities and results, both through regular publishing of minutes of Working Group meetings and through participation of its representatives in various events.

During the Action Plan preparation process, the Working Group met on a regular basis, including both full group meetings and core group meetings to discuss specific commitment proposals. The discussions of proposed commitments included both CSOs representatives and representatives of competent state authorities, in a transparent and open process. In this way, some of the commitments proposed by the CSOs were fully accepted, some were adjusted through collaboration between the proponent and the competent state authority, while in respect of some the competent authority took the view they were impossible to implement within the framework of the OGP Action Plan for 2018-2020, in which case a clear statement of reasons was provided.

2C. Participation and Co-creation in Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting on the Action Plan

During the implementation of the Action Plan, implementation monitoring and reporting processes took place through cooperation between all involved stakeholders, in three main ways: **through Working Group meetings**, where the competent authorities reported to other forum members on the progress achieved in the implementation of commitments; through the **drawing up of relevant reports on Action Plan implementation**; and **through events organised for the general public**, the purpose of which was to present both the results of implementation of specific commitments under the Action Plan and the overall achievements of Serbia's participation in the OGP and promotion of this initiative. In this context, it should be noted that the last six months of implementation of this Action Plan coincided with the global COVID-19 pandemic, the effects of which were also felt in the Republic of Serbia; furthermore, elections at all levels – national, provincial and local – were also called and held during this period. These circumstances certainly affected the effectiveness of participation and collaboration in Action Plan implementation, monitoring and reporting.

As already stated, **during the period of Action Plan implementation, the Working Group held four meetings**, at which it reviewed the level of fulfilment and the progress achieved in the implementation of the commitments, as well as the challenges and future steps. The meetings were held on 8 April, 12 July, 11 December 2019 and 9 May 2020.³⁴ In the monitoring and reporting process carried out by the Working Group, the state authorities responsible for implementation of

the commitments reported on the progress achieved and other related issues at the meetings, after which the forum discussed the presented results. Monitoring of commitments implementation by the general public and **dissemination of information** by the Working Group regarding the level of progress achieved was enabled through regular publishing of minutes of Working Group meetings, containing all relevant information, on the MPALSG website³⁵ and on the OGP platform.³⁶

In addition to implementation monitoring through minutes of meetings, **two reports on Action Plan implementation** were also drawn up and published in 2019. Civic Initiatives, in cooperation with the partner CSOs within the framework of the project supported by the OGP donor fund, drawn up the **Report on Implementation of the Action Plan on OGP Implementation in the Republic of Serbia for 2018-2020**, after the **first six months of its application**.³⁷ This report was drawn up on the basis of research, analysis and processing of publicly available information, regular communication

OGP STANDARDS ACHIEVED DURING THE 3rd CYCLE AND AP PREPARATION:

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

- ✓ The Working Group held 4 meetings to discuss progress in AP implementation
- ✓ Dissemination of information and progress monitoring was enabled through regular publishing of minutes of Working Group meetings
- ✓ Two reports were prepared and published – interim (drawn up by CSOs) and annual (self-assessment)

³⁴ The meeting held on 19 May 2020 was the first meeting of the Working Group tasked with preparing the new OGP Action Plan for 2020-2022; progress in the implementation of the Action Plan for 2018-2020 was also discussed at this meeting.

³⁵ <http://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/Medjuministarska-radna-grupa-zapisnici.7z>

³⁶ <https://ogp.rs/akcioni-plan-2018-2020/>

³⁷ The report is available at https://ogp.rs/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Izve%C5%A1taj-o-pracenju-sprovo%C4%91enja-AP-POU-2018-20_final.pdf

with representatives of state administration bodies and CSOs and the information presented at the meetings of the working groups on OGP and public administration reform. To mark the presentation of the Report findings, an event titled *What does the Government do to make administration more open, accountable and efficient and increase citizen satisfaction?* was held on 29 July 2019, at which representatives of the CSOs and the state authorities comprising the Working Group spoke of the results achieved in Action Plan implementation and future steps in that direction.³⁸ Working Group members collaborated on the **Annual Report – Self-Assessment of Action Plan Implementation**, which was discussed at the Working Group meeting on 11 December 2019 and subsequently published on the MPALSG website³⁹ and the OGP platform.⁴⁰

As regards the OGP standards pertaining to **spaces and platforms for dialogue and co-creation**, two open-type events were held during Action Plan implementation to review the achieved results. The first such event involved the aforementioned presentation of the report on Action Plan implementation in the first six months, which was held in July 2019 and was open to all interested civil society representatives.⁴¹ On the other hand, in June 2020 there was a series of 8 consultative online meetings to determine priorities and solicit proposals of commitments for the new Action Plan for 2020-2022. Although monitoring of implementation of the previous Action Plan was not the primary focus of any of them, each of the consultative meetings which addressed specific topics

corresponding to the OGP values also included a presentation of the main results achieved in the implementation of the Action Plan for 2018-2020 in the specific area covered by the topic of the meeting. All interested CSO representatives were free to participate in the meetings.⁴²

A specific space for dialogue, and also for promoting the OGP and the results of Serbia's participation in this initiative to date, was the **marking of the OGP Week in the Republic of Serbia** through various events at both national and local levels, from 11 to 15 March 2019. To mark the beginning of preparation of local action plans, as well as to promote the OGP at the local level, round tables were held on 11 March in Vlasotince and Lapovo and on 12 March in Sombor, with a view to initiating dialogue between citizens, civil society, the business sector and local self-

³⁸ <https://ogp.rs/vesti/predstavljeno-izvestaj-o-sprovođenju-trećeg-akcionog-plana-pou/>

³⁹ <http://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/Godi%C5%A1nji-izve%C5%A1taj-o-sprovo%C4%91enju-AP-OGP-2018-2020-Copy.pdf>

⁴⁰ <https://ogp.rs/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Godi%C5%A1nji-izve%C5%A1taj-o-sprovo%C4%91enju-AP-OGP-2018-2020-OBJAVLJENO-31.-DEC-2019....xls>

⁴¹ The call for the event was published on the OGP platform <https://ogp.rs/vesti/poziv-sta-radi-vlada-rs-da-bi-bila-otvorena-odgovornija-i-efikasnija-a-gradani-zadovoljniji/#more-1049>, on the OCSC website <https://bit.ly/35yJ6BF> and on social networks.

⁴² The call for participation in the meetings was published on the OGP platform <https://ogp.rs/vesti/serija-online-konsultacija-sa-ocd-o-akcionom-planu-parterstva-za-otvorenu-upravu-2020-22/>, on the websites of the OCSC <https://bit.ly/32PRlr0> and the MPALSG <http://mduls.gov.rs/obavestjenja/partnerstvo-za-otvorenu-upravu-konsultativni-sastanci-u-izradi-novog-akcionog-plana/> and on social networks. The report of the consultative meetings is available at <http://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/Izve%C5%A1taj-sa-konsultativnih-sastanaka-sa-OCD-AP-OGP-2020-2022-FINAL.docx>

governments and to promote activities in response to citizens' actual needs in the areas covered by the Partnership.⁴³

The final event of the OGP Week was the national conference held on 15 March 2019, titled *Open Government Partnership in Serbia – Openness in the service of trust*, which the MPALSG hosted in cooperation with the OSCE Mission to Serbia, with support from the project Support to Public Administration Reform Visibility and Communication. In the opening part of the conference, which was attended by representatives of state authorities, local self-governments and the civil sector from across Serbia, the participants were addressed by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, the Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, the head of the EU Delegation to Serbia, the head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia and the acting UNDP Resident Representative in Serbia.⁴⁴



After the introductory addresses, a panel discussion was held, in which representatives of state authorities, the donor community and CSOs presented their experiences concerning participation in the national OGP

activities and touched upon the current Action Plan for 2018-2020, while the local self-governments that opted for developing local open government action plans presented good practice examples. The final part of the Conference involved work in smaller groups dedicated to discussing the current state and ways of promoting the principles of open government in Serbia and raising citizens' awareness of the OGP values.

According to the OGP standards, the spaces and platforms for dialogue and co-creation in the implementation, monitoring and reporting on the Action Plan also involve monitoring of **cooperation of the national government with the IRM**. In this context, throughout the third Action Plan cycle, the MPALSG, as the state authority managing Serbia's participation in the OGP, continued coordinating the cooperation between the IRM and other government institutions and the Working Group. Members of the Working Group, including representatives of state authorities, took part in the processes of drafting the reports prepared by the IRM in this cycle through surveys and interviews with the IRM's representatives. The MPALSG forwarded drafts of those reports to the Working Group and solicited comments

**OGP STANDARDS
ACHIEVED DURING THE
3rd CYCLE AND AP
PREPARATION:**

**SPACES AND
PLATFORMS FOR
DIALOGUE AND CO-
CREATION**

- ✓ 2 open-type meetings with CSOs held
- ✓ OGP Week marked in Serbia
- ✓ Cooperation with IRM developed – distribution of reports and participation in events

⁴³ <https://bit.ly/2HToISv>

⁴⁴ <http://mduls.gov.rs/saopstenja/veca-otvorenost-vece-poverenje-gradjana-u-drzavu/>



from its members, while the MPALSG and the OCCS posted public calls for comments by the interested public on their websites. Final versions of the reports with recommendations were presented at Working Group meetings and published on the MPALSG website.⁴⁵

In addition, representatives of state authorities took part in an event titled *Achievements and Challenges of Open Government in Serbia*, which the IRM organised in April 2018 to mark the presentation of the Interim Progress Report on implementation of the OGP Action Plan for 2016 and 2017, i.e. the report assessing the country's progress in the first year of Action Plan implementation. The Government delegated high-ranking representatives to this event and the introductory panel was attended by the Assistant Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, the Acting Director of the Public Policy Secretariat and the Acting Director of the OCCS.⁴⁶

Finally, as regards the OGP standard pertaining to **co-ownership and joint decision-making in the course of implementation**, we have already underscored the role of the Working Group, as a multi-stakeholder forum, in overseeing and monitoring Action Plan implementation, as well as in examining ways to improve it. Furthermore, in addition to the fact that Working Group members were directly involved in the drawing up of the self-assessment report through submission of their contributions, draft versions of those reports were presented to the forum for comments and feedback on their content. In this context, the Draft End-of-Term Self-Assessment Report on Implementation of the Action Plan on OGP Implementation for 2018-2020 was submitted to the members of the Working Group in November 2020 for comments and suggestions, in parallel with its publishing for public consultation.

OGP STANDARDS
ACHIEVED DURING THE
3rd CYCLE AND AP
PREPARATION:
**CO-OWNERSHIP AND
JOINT DECISION-
MAKING**

- ✓ Active role of the Working Group in reviewing AP implementation and ways to improve it
- ✓ Working Group reviews and comments on self-assessment reports

⁴⁵ <http://mduls.gov.rs/uprava-po-meri-svih-nas/strateska-dokumenta/>

⁴⁶ <https://cep.org.rs/aktivnije-ukljucivanje-civilnog-drustva-u-proces-otvaranja-uprave/>



3. RECOMMENDATIONS BY IRM

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS	Acknowledged	Included in the Action Plan
1. To ensure continuity of OGP activities in the context of frequent administration changes and high frequency of the electoral process, proper handover mechanisms are needed. IRM recommends establishing an OGP multistakeholder forum with an adequate mandate and scope of work covering all phases of the action plan cycle, including the implementation.	✓	✓
2. To increase financial transparency, the next action plan should include a commitment introducing open budgeting at national and local levels, specifically disclosing financial plans and expenditure reports in open data formats.	✓	X
3. To ensure the continuity of high-impact commitments, the government should carry forward and scale up activities with demonstrated impact. For example, the current commitment on the open data portal should be expanded to encompass a wider range of institutions and datasets.	✓	✓
4. Focus on commitments with clear citizen engagement and public accountability tools. Expand citizen input mechanisms, such as the portal developed by the Public Policy Secretariat, which is currently limited to business representatives. Authorities need to ensure transparent and timely feedback to citizens' proposals.	✓	✓
5. Develop a more targeted communication approach and awareness-raising activities to increase citizen involvement in formulation of OGP commitments. Additionally, the government needs to consider wider cooperation with CSOs at central and local level.	✓	✓

In accordance with **key IRM recommendation 1**, the Working Group adopted its Rules of Procedure, which are published on the MPALSG website⁴⁷ and which, in addition to the operating and decision-making procedures of the Working Group, also set forth the rules on handover of membership in case of staff changes, to ensure continuity of Working Group operations.

In accordance with **key IRM recommendation 2**, with a view to improving fiscal transparency, the Action Plan also includes a commitment to publish the budget of the Republic of Serbia in a machine-readable format. However, this commitment does not include publishing of financial plans and expenditure reports in an open data form. As regards local self-government budgets, it should be noted that their publishing is the responsibility of local self-governments and it was therefore not possible to include a proposal for this commitment in the national Action Plan. In view of the foregoing, as well as the fact that the commitment, the way it is defined in the Action Plan, has not been realised, this recommendation cannot be considered implemented.

In accordance with **key IRM recommendation 3**, continuity of high-impact commitments has been ensured in certain areas, such as open data, while certain commitments that were not fully realised during the implementation of the second Action Plan have been reintroduced to ensure their full realisation, for example the commitment to introduce electronic Information Booklets on the work of authorities.

In accordance with **key IRM recommendation 4**, this Action Plan also provides for continued implementation of certain commitments set

forth in the second Action Plan pertaining to citizen engagement and public accountability tools, for example the commitment “Simplify administrative procedures and regulations – e-PAPER. Furthermore, the Action Plan also includes a commitment involving the introduction of legal grounds and the establishment of an electronic system for citizens’ e-voting, aimed at ensuring direct citizen engagement in decision-making through electronic initiation and participation in mechanisms such as people’s initiatives and referendums. It should be noted that certain commitments have been developed further on the basis of acquired experience, in line with the general IRM recommendations, for example the commitment “Support to improved cooperation between state authorities and civil society organisations in the process of drafting, enactment and monitoring of application of regulations”. This commitment is also covered by the previous IRM recommendation, which calls for joint trainings for civil servants and CSOs on the subject of cooperation, as well as development of an appropriate manual on this topic..

Key IRM recommendation 5 relates to a more targeted communication approach and wider cooperation with CSOs at central and local level. To that end, significant efforts were made both in the preparation period and during implementation of the Action Plan. To promote the OGP initiative at the local levels, take stock of the results of the previous Action Plan and review the proposed commitments for the third Action Plan, four meetings were held outside of Belgrade in 2018 and several events were organised in 2019 to mark the OGP Week in Serbia.⁴⁸

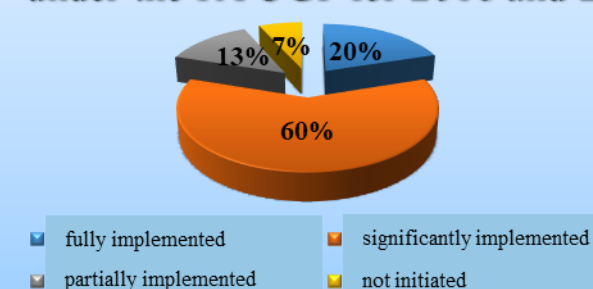
⁴⁷ <http://www.mduls.gov.rs/partnerstvo-otv-upravu-2018.php>

⁴⁸ For more information on this recommendation, see previous parts of this report relating to dissemination of information on the OGP and Action Plan preparation and implementation processes.

4. OVERVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMITMENTS UNDER ACTION PLAN

This overview has been made on the basis of individual reports by the authorities responsible for implementing each commitment. The overview covers the implementation period from December 2018 to 31 August 2020 and presents the current state of implementation of the assumed commitments. Out of the 15 commitments in total (14 commitments and one recommendation of the Government of the Republic of Serbia issued to the National Assembly), 3 commitments (20%) have been fully implemented, 9 commitments (60%) have been significantly implemented, 2 commitments (13%) have been partially implemented, while implementation of one commitment (7%) has not been initiated. The level of implementation of a commitment is measured against implemented activities with clearly defined timeframes and responsible institutions for each commitment.

Overview of the level of implementation of activities planned under the PA OGP for 2018 and 2020



Lead implementing agencies for planned activities



Out of the total number, the MPALSG was responsible for implementing 5 commitments (33%), the OCCS was responsible for 3 (20%), the Public Policy Secretariat, the Office for IT and e-Government, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Environmental Protection, the Anti-Corruption Agency and the National Assembly were responsible for one commitment each (6.67%), while the responsibility for one commitment was shared between two authorities: the Ministry of Culture and Media and the Business Registers Agency (3.33% each).

**TABLE PRESENTING THE LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSUMED COMMITMENTS (1/2)**

COMMITMENT	Completion level			
	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
COMMITMENT 1: Publishing of the Law on Budget of the Republic of Serbia in a machine-readable format	✓			
COMMITMENT 2: Development of an e-Calendar of public calls for financing of projects and programmes of civil society organisations from budget funds of public administration bodies of the Republic of Serbia			✓	
COMMITMENT 3: Ensuring availability of data on planned and spent amounts within local funds for environmental protection			✓	
COMMITMENT 4: Opening of data from public calls for financing the work of associations and co-financing of development of the media content of public interest			✓	
COMMITMENT 5: Preparation of reports/indicators on CSOs (associations, foundations and endowments) in an open format			✓	
COMMITMENT 6: Amending of the Bylaw on Documentation Enclosed for Registration of the Media with the Media Register and technical improvement of presentation of data in the Register				✓
COMMITMENT 7: Assistance with and monitoring of adoption of LAP			✓	
COMMITMENT 8: Updating of electoral roll				✓

**TABLE PRESENTING THE LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSUMED COMMITMENTS (2/2)**

COMMITMENT	Completion level			
	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
COMMITMENT 9: Simplification of administrative procedures and regulations – ePAPER			√	
COMMITMENT 10: Establishment of an e-Notice Board for all state administration and local self-government bodies			√	
COMMITMENT 11: Improving proactive transparency – Information Booklet		√		
COMMITMENT 12: Amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance		√		
COMMITMENT 13: Support to improved cooperation between public administration bodies and civil society organisations in the process of drafting, enactment and monitoring of application of regulations			√	
COMMITMENT 14: Creating legal basis and implementing an electronic system for e-civic engagement			√	
Increasing transparency and participation at sessions of parliamentary committees of the National Assembly outside of its headquarters				√



A. OPEN DATA/FISCAL TRANSPARENCY

COMMITMENT 1: Publishing of the Law on Budget of the Republic of Serbia in a machine-readable format				
Period – Commitment Start and End Date implementation not initiated				
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Finance			
Description of Commitment				
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	The budget of the Republic of Serbia is not published in a machine-readable format.			
What is the commitment?	The Ministry of Finance will also publish the Law on Budget of the Republic of Serbia in WORD and EXCEL formats, in addition to the existing presentation in PDF format.			
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	The Law on Budget will be published in WORD and EXCEL formats on the official website of the Ministry of Finance. This would facilitate access to the content of the Law on Budget for the general public, in accordance with the principle of state administration transparency, thus simplifying its downloading and electronic processing for subsequent presentation. This would improve interpretation of publicly available data and consequently facilitate the use of such data.			
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	Publishing of the budget in a machine-readable format is fully compliant with the open government principles proclaimed by the Open Government Partnership. Publishing data in a machine-readable format would improve availability of data.			
Additional information (optional)				
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
	✓			



Description of results	The Ministry of Finance published the Law on Budget for 2019 in Word document.			
Next steps	/			
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. The Law on Budget also published in a machine-readable format on the official website of the Ministry of Finance		/	/	Not Started
Contact				
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Finance			
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Branislav Stipanović,			
Title, Department	Head of the Group for IT Support to Budget			
Email and phone number	branislav.stipanovic@mfin.gov.rs , phone: 3642 915			
Other actors involved	/			



COMMITMENT 2: Development of an e-Calendar of public calls for financing of projects and programmes of civil society organisations from budget funds of public administration bodies of the Republic of Serbia

Period – Commitment Start and End Date
Q4 2018 - Q1 2020

Lead implementing agency Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society⁴⁹

Description of Commitment

What is the public problem that the commitment will address?

Since 2013, at the beginning of each calendar year the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society (“the Office”) has been collecting information from state and provincial administration bodies on planned public calls for financing of projects/programmes of civil society organisations (CSOs) and, in accordance with collected data, has been preparing and publishing the Calendar of Public Calls for financing of projects and programmes of associations and other civil society organisations from budget funds of state administration bodies of the Republic of Serbia and the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (“the Calendar of Public Calls”). The Calendar is prepared as follows: the Office distributes to state and provincial administration bodies a form consisting of an Excel sheet where they enter titles of and fields covered by public calls, participants, provisional deadlines and allocated funds and other relevant data and then return forms to the Office. All collected forms are processed and entered into a single Excel sheet and are published on the official website of the Office in the form of the Calendar of Public Calls in a machine-readable format.

The new Regulation on Funds to Support Programmes or Missing Amount of Funds for Programmes of Public Interest implemented by Associations (*Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* No. 16/18) introduces important novelties aimed at increasing transparency of funds awarding process from the moment such funds are planned, by establishing a duty to publish an annual plan of announcement of public calls by 31 January at the latest and to submit information to the Office, which then publishes the Calendar of Public Calls of all competent authorities on its official website. In addition to introduction of the mandatory Calendar of Public Calls, these provisions also include local self-government units among bodies which must submit data to the Office (so far, data have been collected from state and provincial administration bodies on a voluntary basis).

Also, since 2011, the Office has been monitoring the execution of public calls for the award of budget funds to associations and other civil society organisations through preparation of the Annual Summary Report on spending of funds provided and paid to associations and other civil society organisations from the budget of the Republic of Serbia as support to programme activities (“the Annual Summary Report”). This Report is prepared on the basis of data provided to the Office from by administration bodies at all three government levels (national, provincial and local) through online questionnaires, which are then processed and integrated in summary data on the amount of funds awarded, the number of supported projects and programmes, their scope, the manner of funds awarding etc.

⁴⁹ The Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society ceased to exist when the Law on Ministries (*Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* No. 128/20) entered into force, and its purview was assumed by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue.



	<p>According to the most recent data made available by the Office, notwithstanding the duty to publish results of public calls on official websites of competent authorities, these results were published in only 77% of all cases; notice boards of authorities are used as an additional manner of publication, while in 8% of cases results are not published.</p> <p>However, although a high percentage of the results is published, it has been observed in practice that they are most often not published in a machine-readable format, which prevents research and analytical actions and further cross-checking of data. Practical implementation has also revealed there is a need for a central location (a single database) where data on all public calls planned, published and implemented by public administration bodies and their results would be available in a machine-readable format.</p>
What is the commitment?	<p>The commitment includes development of the Calendar of Public Calls as an application through which competent authorities at all government levels would publish the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on planned public calls intended for financing CSOs in the current year, in accordance with the Regulation (before they are announced, at the beginning of the year); • Issued public calls with all bidding documents (or a link to a web address where it is available); • Results of announced public calls, including main data on supported projects/programmes and beneficiaries. <p>Also, results of the search of the Calendar could be downloaded in a machine-readable format (open data). Apart from being a database, the application would also contain the Calendar itself, which could be searched based on various criteria (field of public call, competent authority, time limits etc.), while downloading of search results in a machine-readable format would enable further processing of contained data for analytical purposes.</p> <p>The general objective of the commitment is to increase the transparency of budget funding of CSOs throughout the entire process and to create a single record of all public calls issued by public administration bodies on a single location.</p> <p>Accordingly, it is expected that compliance with this commitment would significantly increase the transparency of CSO funding, facilitate availability of all public calls and data about them to the interested public and strengthen the capacities of government bodies in the field of e-government in Serbia.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	<p>The electronic calendar of public calls will significantly improve the process of monitoring all planned public calls intended for financing CSOs which has been used so far, including preparation of the Calendar and the Annual Summary Report, and improve their availability for use and simplify their further analysis.</p> <p>In addition, it will facilitate and improve access to information about planned and announced public calls and, most importantly, about their results, by creating a single record of all such information.</p> <p>Overall, this commitment will increase transparency and visibility of support to CSOs by all administration bodies, as well as the full amount of planned funds allocated by the Republic of Serbia at all levels to finance associations and other CSOs.</p>



Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>The commitment is relevant for fiscal transparency of public authorities because it involves publishing of more information, improvement in the quality of published information and increased availability of information on public calls and funding of programmes and projects of CSOs from budget funds in general. Publishing of data in a machine-readable format provides an additional value for this commitment, which enables further processing of data and their use for analytical purposes.</p> <p>Finally, the commitment also involves the use of new technologies and innovation, which additionally increases its relevance for further advancing the OGP values.</p>			
Additional information (optional)				
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
			✓	
Description of results	<p>The application was developed. The application for data collecting and presentation of the Calendar of Public Calls was developed through the project “Open Data – Open Possibilities” implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Office for Information Technologies and e-Government, with support from the World Bank, the UK Governance Fund and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.</p> <p>Since the commissioning of the application, the Office has been continually providing support to public administration bodies in filling in the application and submission of data for the Calendar of Public Calls. The following data were collected for 2019: 781 planned public calls by 175 public administration bodies (90% of the total number).</p> <p>Taking into account the need to publish the Calendar of Public Calls as early as possible in a calendar year in order to achieve its purpose of timely provision of information to CSOs on planned public calls, and that its preparation required more resources and time than expected, the Office decided to include in the Calendar for 2019 only data on planned public calls, and not data on their results, because it would require additional time and delay the publishing of the entire application. As a result, activity 4 was not implemented, namely, administration bodies were not asked to submit data on results of public calls because the application was not developed in that segment.</p>			
Next steps	<p>In the coming period, activities are planned to upgrade the Calendar of Public Calls by providing technical preconditions and collecting data on implementation of public calls.</p> <p>NOTE: The following deadlines were entered in accordance with the deadlines specified under the Action Plan and taking into account the development of the application and the completion of the Calendar of Public Calls for 2019. In this context, it should be noted that the Office also collected data for 2020, so the Calendar currently contains 728 planned public calls, but data collecting for 2020 was temporarily suspended due</p>			



	to the declared state of emergency. More precisely, since the application was rolled out in February 2019, the data entering process has been continual.		
Milestone status	Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Structuring of the questionnaire and development of software for data collecting	Q4 2018	Q1 2019	Completed
2. Provision of support to public administration bodies in completion of the questionnaire	Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Completed
3. Promotion of the e-Calendar of Public Calls	Q1 2019	Q3 2019	Completed
4. Monitoring and support to public administration bodies in publishing of results of public calls	/	/	Not Started
5. Analysis of the use of the e-Calendar of Public Calls for 2019	Q1 2019	Q1 2020	Completed
Contact			
Lead implementing agency	Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society		
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Milena Nedeljkov		
Title, Department	Head of the Department for Planning and Creating Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development		
Email and phone number	milena.banovic@civilnodrustvo.gov.rs ; 011/3130-972		
Other actors involved	Office for Information Technologies and e-Government, UNDP, CSOs, SCTM		



COMMITMENT 3: Ensuring availability of data on planned and spent amounts within local funds for environmental protection

Period – Commitment Start and End Date Q2 2019 – ongoing	
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Description of Commitment	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	With the aim of ensuring funds for improvement of environmental protection and achieving EU standards in that field, the Law sets out the duty for local self-government (“LSGUs”) to found budget funds for environment protection. It also provides that budget funding is to be used for financing protection and improvement of the environment on the basis of spending programmes, subject to prior approval by the Ministry of Environmental Protection. Local budget funding is provided from environment protection fees. In addition, there is also a duty to submit reports on the use of budget funding (Law on Environment Protection, <i>Official Gazette of RS</i> Nos. 135/04, 36/09 and 14/16, Article 100, paragraphs 1, 3 and 4). Analyses carried out so far have shown there is no balance between revenue from fees and funds spent for activities and projects in the field of environment protection. On the other hand, planning and spending of funds for these purposes is not transparent and publicly available in most of the LSGUs. Spending programmes and reports on spending of local funds of LSGUs are submitted to the Ministry only in hard copy and are not published. Given that Serbia faces a tremendous challenge in its efforts to ensure compliance with high EU standards and that this requires stable and sustainable funding at all government levels, planning and spending of such funds must be transparent and must involve consultation with all interested parties on the basis of publicly available data.
What is the commitment?	The commitment includes opening of data on planned and spent amounts within local funds for environment protection. The aim of the commitment is to improve the financing system for environment protection through establishing responsible spending of public funds. The expected result of this commitment is the achievement of transparent management of funds allocated for environment protection.
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	Opening of data on the amounts planned and spent on environment protection from local budget funds and their availability in a machine-readable format will ensure access to and control and analysis of data for all interested parties. Such availability of data will ensure improved participation for civil society organisations, the private sector and citizens and thus contribute to more responsible decision-making by LSGUs on the spending of public funds.
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	Introduction of this commitment contributes to the following proclaimed Open Government Partnership principles: transparency, accountability and use of new technologies and innovation.



Additional information (optional)	Improvement of fiscal accountability is one of the key priorities of the Government's Programme. Establishing of a sustainable financial framework in the field of environment protection, which implies efficient use of public and private funds, is provided for in the Action Plan on Implementation of the Government's Programme and constitutes the basis for implementation of a multi-annual investment plan related to implementation of the Serbia's National EU Accession Strategy. In addition, compliance with this commitment will contribute to greater accountability and transparency in the work of public authorities in accordance with the objectives of the Public Administration Reform Strategy, the e-Government Development Strategy and the National Anti-Corruption Strategy.			
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
			✓	
Description of results	Due to declaration of the state of emergency in March 2020, the implementation process was suspended. During the summer, the entire installation and testing of application were completed. During September, LSGUs submitted names of authorised persons which have accounts opened on the application. From 1 October, LSGUs began entering programmes and reports for the current year. Since the process was delayed for several months, all LSGUs can submit their reports they are required to submit under the Bylaw until 30 June.			
Next steps	Several municipalities have not designated authorised persons yet, and we expect that their accounts will be opened soon. A part of the application for reporting, i.e. opening of data and establishing links towards the Open Data Portal, will be completed by the end of Q1 2021.			
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Passing of a bylaw which specify in detail the manner of submission of data in electronic format		Q2 2019 (June 2019)	Q4 2019. (November 2019)	Completed
2. Preparation of technical specifications and conducting a public procurement procedure for services of development of an application for the submission of programmes and reports on the use of local funds for environment protection		Q4 2019 (November 2019)	Q4 2019 (December 2019)	Completed
3. Development and testing of an application for submission of programmes and reports on the use of local funds for environment protection		Q1 2020 (January 2020)	Q3 2020 (August 2020)	Completed
4. Implementation of training in the use of the application for employees in LSGUs		Q4 2020 (October 2020)	Q1 2021 (March 2021)	Substantial
5. Deploying the application into production		Q2 2020	Q4 2020	Substantial



	(September 2020)	(October 2020)	
6. Provision of support to users for entering data in the new system	Q4 2020. (October 2020)	Ongoing	Ongoing
7. Publishing of the first data in a machine-readable form on the National Open Data Portal	Expected in Q2 2021 (March 2021)	/	/
Contact			
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Environmental Protection		
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Vladan Kojanić		
Title, Department	Secretariat of the Ministry, Manager of the IT Group		
Email and phone number	vladan.kojanic@ekologija.gov.rs		
Other actors involved	Local self-government units, as an actor which should enter data in the information system		

COMMITMENT 4: Opening of data from public calls for financing the work of associations and co-financing of development of the media content of public interest

Period – Commitment Start and End Date	
Q4 2018 – ongoing	
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government Office for Information Technologies and e-Government



Description of Commitment				
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	<p>Public data on the funding of projects in the public, business and civil sectors have garnered much interest from the public. It is estimated that almost RSD 17 billion was spent in 2016 from the budget line 481 for financing of projects alone, while RSD 2 billion was spent on co-financing of projects for development of the media content of public interest.</p> <p>These data are available on the basis of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance. However, the procedure of accessing information is time-consuming and data are not machine-readable. Data on projects financed by citizens' money must be published in an open format so they could be easily accessible and comparable. Adoption of the Law on e-Government and the planned Regulation on Detailed Requirements for Development and Maintenance of Official Websites of Authorities is an excellent opportunity to introduce the duty to publish data from public calls for financing projects for achievement of the public interest implemented by associations and public calls for financing of projects for co-financing of development of the media content of public interest in a machine-readable form.</p>			
What is the commitment?	Publishing of data from public calls for financing projects for achievement of the public interest implemented by associations and public calls for financing of projects for co-financing of development of the media content of public interest in a machine-readable form.			
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	Introduction of the duty to publish public data on projects financed (fully or partially) by public authorities in an open format on their official websites and on the Open Data Portal ensures almost full transparency in this field. When these data are published in an open format, it will no longer be necessary to submit requests to access information of public importance, which will facilitate the work of public authorities and the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection. In addition, open data on projects financed by public money will ensure easier analysis and reuse of public data which may provide additional value for state institutions and the business and civil sectors.			
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	This commitment will contribute to improved transparency of public authorities, and the expected result is the achievement of almost full transparency of public data held by public authorities on the funding of projects implemented by associations and on media content development projects. This will also increase accountability of public authorities and the quality of projects which pursue public interests.			
Additional information (optional)				
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
			✓	
Description of results	The Regulation on Detailed Requirements for Development and Maintenance of Official Websites of Authorities entered into force on 28 December 2018, which introduced a commitment of public administration bodies to publish data in an open and machine-readable format. These data <i>inter alia</i>			



	include data on financed projects. Instructions for opening of data which have been prepared include the Guide through Open Data, the Instructions for Posting Open Data on the Open Data Portal and the Instructions for Open Budgets. These documents are available at the Open Data Portal in an open data form at: https://data.gov.rs/sr/discover/ .			
Next steps	Preparation of a special Guide for opening data from public calls for financing the work of associations and co-financing the development of the media content of public interest is planned.			
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Adoption of the Regulation on the Content of Websites of Public Authorities, which introduces the duty to publish public data on financed projects in an open data form		Q4 2018	Q4 2018	Completed
2. Preparation of a guide		Q1 2019	Ongoing	The activity is still at the implementation level of 70%
Contact				
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government Office for Information Technologies and e-Government			
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Natalija Pavlović Šiniković Mihailo Jovanović			
Title, Department	Assistant Minister, MPALSG, Sector for Development of Good Governance Director, Office for Information Technologies and e-Government			
Email and phone number	natalija.pavlovic@mduls.gov.rs mihailo.jovanovic@ite.gov.rs			
Other actors involved				



COMMITMENT 5: Preparation of reports/indicators on CSOs (associations, foundations and endowments) in an open format

Q4 2018 - Q3 2019
(October 2018 – June 2019)

Lead implementing agency Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society⁵⁰

Description of Commitment

What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	<p>In its everyday work, the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society (“the Office”) receives numerous inquiries about the civil sector by various actors, from citizens, through the media and public administration bodies to civil society organisations themselves and other interested parties. Inquiries mainly relate to the number of CSOs, data on organisations at specific levels of territorial organisation (usually at the levels of districts and local self-government), in certain spheres of activity, inquiries about the year of their formation and other aspects. These data are necessary for various reasons - from sector surveys, through sending invitations to civil society organisations to attend various events and participate in various Government’s working bodies to the need for networking within the civil sector.</p> <p>The Business Registers Agency (BRA) is responsible for registration of associations, endowments and foundations and only this Agency holds comprehensive data about them. The Office and BRA signed in 2018 the Agreement on Downloading Data through Web Service, “Web Service for Keeping up with Changes and Downloading Data from BRA Registers” (PLWS), which ensured automated updating and downloading of data from BRA status registers (associations, endowments and foundations) in the performance of regular activities of the Office.</p> <p>Data obtained through this web service allow the Office to prepare reports/indicators on all civil society organisations (associations, endowments and foundations) – Overview of CSOs, which would be based on searches by much more features.</p>
What is the commitment?	<p>The commitment includes preparation of reports/indicators on CSOs (associations, foundations and endowments) in the Republic of Serbia and an appropriate web application through which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employees in the Office could search CSOs according to certain criteria in order to prepare various analyses and reports and to keep up with trends in the civil society; - Interested parties, primarily representatives of the civil society themselves, state authorities and local self-government units, could request reports/indicators on CSOs according to various criteria and download results of such searches in a machine-readable format (open data). <p>The Office for IT and e-Government would keep data on CSOs and supporting applications using all necessary security measures. Reports/indicators on CSOs would be available on the Open Government Portal at data.gov.rs and could be downloaded as open data files. Open data or a machine-readable format would enable further processing of data for analytical purposes.</p>

⁵⁰ The Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society ceased to exist when the Law on Ministries (*Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* No. 128/20) entered into force, and its purview was taken over by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue.



	<p>The general objective of preparation of reports/indicators on CSOs is improved transparency and availability of information on the civil sector, as well as meeting the need to search data on CSOs according to various criteria.</p> <p>Overview of data on CSOs will over time be expanded by other information of relevance for keeping up with the situation in the civil sector, such as financing of CSOs from budget funds, as well as other relevant data which will be defined on the basis of consultations with users and will be available to users through the broader set services provided by the Office.</p> <p>Implementation of this commitment is expected to make data on registered CSOs transparent and easily accessible to the interested public.</p>			
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	<p>Overview of data on CSOs and supporting web application for the Office will be used as a tool for all interested actors that cooperate or plan to cooperate with CSOs.</p> <p>Their preparation will make available data on registered CSOs to public administration bodies through the Office, by a very simple search, if they want to include CSOs in working bodies, invite CSOs to public debates in a specific field covered by a regulation or to cooperate with them in other ways, while the option of viewing a list of all associations active in their territories will be particularly valuable for local self-governments. Overview of data on CSOs will be particularly useful given that the new legislative provisions introduced by of the Law on the Planning System and amendments to the Law on Public Administration and the Law on Local Self-Government set forth a duty for administration bodies at all levels to ensure much greater involvement of the public, and thus also CSOs, than is currently the case in the passing of regulations and public policy making.</p> <p>In addition, this will ensure greater availability of various data to the media, CSOs and other stakeholders through the Office, on the basis of which various analyses, researches and updates on the situation in the sector could be conducted, CSOs could be invited to attend various events and cooperation with them could be improved, while citizens could more easily find and contact associations they want to join or ask for help.</p> <p>The overview of data on CSOs available through the Office could be used by donors to invite CSOs to info sessions on open public calls and in general to expand the circle of CSOs to which they can award funds for projects/programmes.</p> <p>In addition, the Office would be able to perform more efficiently its day-to-day activities involved in establishing cooperation and dialogue between public administration and CSOs if it had access to daily updated, comprehensive and full data on CSOs.</p>			
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>The commitment is relevant for open data and transparency because it involves publishing more data about CSOs and easier access to various pieces of information on associations, foundations and endowments in the Republic of Serbia. Reports/indicators on CSOs published in a machine-readable format can be processed further and used for analytical purposes. In addition, this commitment also involves the use of new technologies and innovation, which further increases its relevance for OGP values.</p>			
Additional information (optional)				
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed



			✓	
Description of results	<p>The commitment was mainly implemented through preparation and publishing of the data set on the Open Data Portal. In cooperation with the Business Registers Agency (BRA), reports/indicators on CSOs (associations, endowments and foundations) in the Republic of Serbia were created in 2019, which contain data on the number and structure of the civil society organisations in the Republic of Serbia based on the data in the Register of Associations and in the Register of Endowments and Associations maintained by the Business Registers Agency, taken for a specific period of time. The general objective of preparation of these reports/indicators is increased transparency and availability of information on the civil sector and responding to the need to search data on civil society organisations according to more various criteria than those currently available on the official website of the Business Registers Agency. This data set was published for two periods of time in 2019 – on 11 April and 3 June 2019.</p> <p>Based on the data opened by the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society in cooperation with the BRA, within the Open Data Challenge, CATAYST formed the Neprofitne.rs - an online platform for assessment of transparency and integrity of non-profit organisations, through which CSOs can show their openness and influence, while donors and the community can decide to whom support should be provided.</p> <p>NOTE: In terms of the activities under this commitment, this commitment was fully implemented. However, the description of the commitment does not specify that, in addition to preparation of reports/indicators on CSOs and posting of data on the Open Data Portal, this commitment also implies the development of a web application which would: 1) enable searching of CSOs based on specific criteria for the purpose of preparing various analyses and reports and keeping up with trends in the civil society; 2) enable interested parties, in particular representatives of the civil society themselves, as well as public authorities and local self-government units, to retrieve reports/indicators on CSOs based on various criteria and download the results of these searches in a machine-readable form (open data).</p> <p>This application was developed and piloted within the Office, but it was not published because it needed to be technically upgraded, and thus ordering of reports as defined in the commitment was not possible.</p>			
Next steps				
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Provision of advisory support to the Office for use of the web service and formation of a CSO database		Q4 2018 (October 2018)	Q4 2018 (December 2018)	Completed
2. Stage one - preparation of reports/indicators which can be useful for CSOs and the public		Q4 2018 (December 2018)	Q1 2019 (January 2019)	Completed
3. Development of a dedicated subdomain on the official website of the Office at civilnodrustvo.gov.rs where reports/indicators will be available		Q4 2018 (December 2018)	Q1 2019 (January 2019)	Completed



4. Stage two - testing of the Overview of Data on CSOs within the Office, development and defining of a set of data which will be available on the Open Data Portal and for the Open Data Challenge	Q4 2018 (December 2018)	Q1 2019 (February/March 2019)	Completed
5. Announcement and implementation of the Open Data Challenge (opening of the first level of data on CSOs)	Q2 2019 (April 2019)	Q2 2019 (May 2019)	Completed
6. Opening of additional reports/indicators on CSOs for the public and promotion	Q2 2019 (April 2019)	Q3 2019 (June 2019)	Completed
Contact			
Lead implementing agency	Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society		
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Milena Nedeljkov		
Title, Department	Head of the Department for Planning and Creating Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development		
Email and phone number	milena.banovic@civilnodrustvo.gov.rs ; 011/3130-972		
Other actors involved	Business Registers Agency, Office for Information Technologies and e-Government, UNDP, CSOs		

COMMITMENT 6: Amending of the Bylaw on Documentation Enclosed for Registration of the Media with the Media Register and technical improvement of presentation of data in the Register

Q1 2019 - Q4 2019	
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Culture and Information Business Registers Agency



Description of Commitment	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	<p>The proposed commitment should ensure greater transparency of data on the spending of budget funds in the media sector.</p> <p>Information on the total budget funding allocated to the media sector is not fully available to the public because there is no official data which would comprehensively present the total amount of public funds allocated for the co-financing of projects and the media through public calls, individual allocations, through marketing or otherwise (public procurement, advertising etc.).</p> <p>The Law on Public Information and Media provides for the establishment of the Media Register as a central spot which would ensure public availability of data on the media.</p> <p>However, it is evident from the current state of operation of the Media Register shows the need to amend the Bylaw on Documentation Enclosed for Registration of the Media with the Media Register in order to address the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money awarded to the media by the state is classified either as “funds awarded as state aid” or as “funds not awarded on the basis of state aid rules” (funds received by public authorities), which means that these two very wide categories of financial allocations are not defined in detail, • Documents containing data on funds are clearly defined only for funds awarded according to the state aid rules (a decision on distribution of funds is submitted), while any document could be used for the other categories of financial allocations, • Data presentation is not satisfactory because an average user is not able to easily find relevant data on financial allocations to the media and cross-checking of data is not possible, • The data on financial allocations in the Media Register are not updated, • The supervisory mechanism for compliance with the duty to submit data on the amount of awarded money has several issues, while sanctions are inadequate and not efficient enough.
What is the commitment?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To amend the Bylaw on Documentation Enclosed for Registration of the Media with the Media Register (lead implementing agency: Ministry of Culture and Media) – It is necessary to: define in detail the type of public funds awarded to the media; to define time limits for submission of data to the registrar; to define in detail the documents required to be submitted to the Media Register and categories of data (in accordance with the Recommendation 2 on improvement of technical performances of the Register); 2. To improve technical performance and presentation of data in the Media Register (lead implementing agency: BRA). <p>Categories of data which would be publicly available would include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification data on the providers of state aid or contracting authorities in public procurement procedures; • The number, date and title of a decision on award of state aid or the number, date and title of a decision on contract award in public procurement procedures; • Legal basis for the passing of a decision on award of state aid or a decision on contract award; • The amount of state aid or the value of contracts in public procurement procedures; • The source of funding (specific budget item from which state aid or public procurement is financed);



	• Other data as appropriate.			
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	Transparency of state subsidies is the first, key step in evaluation of the total amount of money allocated to the media sector. In addition, only full data and facilitated access to information on money flows can ensure control of spending, i.e. whether the money has been spent for intended purposes and what effect it had in terms of provision of information. Access to information is also one of the most important anti-corruption mechanisms.			
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	The proposed commitment contributes to the achievement of several key values and topics which are priorities of the OGP: it ensures to the public and all interested parties to access information of public importance, enables control of budget money spending and also encourages accountability of public authorities which handle budget money.			
Additional information (optional)	The basis for proposed changes, relevant researches, documents and specific reasons for amendments to laws and secondary legislation are available in the document titled Transparency of Data on State Spending on Media Sector at: https://kazitrazi.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/TRANSPARENTNOST-PODATAKA-DRZAVNA-POTROSNIJA.pdf .			
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
				✓
Description of results	<p>1. Two consultative meetings were held with the line Ministry of Culture and Media. The first was dedicated to the volume of duties the Ministry would undertake under the AP OGP, while the second specifically addressed amendments to the Media Register. The meeting was also attended by a representative of the BRA and representatives of the Share Foundation and other media associations. After the meeting, BIRN submitted a technical proposal for amendments to the Register.</p> <p>2. Prepared amendments to the Bylaw were developed by the line Ministry</p> <p>3. One Article (Article 4) of the Bylaw amending the Bylaw on Documentation Enclosed for Registration of the Media with the Media Register was amended in June 2019. Under that amendment, a public authority, as a funder, will submit to the BRA documentation containing information on the awarded or received funds, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A decision by the public authority on the award of funds to the media as state aid, based on implemented public calls and individual allocations for co-financing projects in the field of provision of public information in the pursuit of a public interest; 2) An enactment based on which funds are awarded to the media and the amount of funds received on any grounds, whether directly or indirectly, which were awarded pursuant to the rules on the award of state aid; 3) Evidence demonstrating that the registration procedure fee was paid. 			



	4. Technical amendments to the Media Register were implemented in accordance with the commitment, and the following data on the media are now publicly available in addition to the data which have been available so far relating to financial allocations to the media: 1. Identification data on the state aid provider, i.e. the contracting authority in a public procurement procedure- registration number and name 2. The number, date and title of the decision on the award of state aid, or the number, date and title of the decision on contract award in a public procurement procedure 3. Information on the amount of state aid, or the contract value in a public procurement procedure 4. Publishing of documents, decisions on the award of state aid and contracts in public procurement procedures will be enabled.			
Next steps				
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Implementation of a consultative process		Q1 2019 (January 2019)	Q1 2019 (January 2019)	Completed
2. Preparation of amendments to the Bylaw		Q1 2019 (February 2019)	Q2 2019 (June 2019)	Completed
3. Passing of the Bylaw		Q1 2019 (March 2019)	Q2 2019 (June 2019)	Completed
4. Start and end date for development of software for keeping the Media Register at the BRA		Q3 2019 (August 2019)	Q4 2019 (October 2019)	Completed
Contact				
Lead implementing agency	1. Ministry of Culture and Information 2. Business Registers Agency			
Persons responsible from implementing agency	1. Slavica Trifunović 2. Ružica Mačukat			
Title, Department	1. Assistant Minister, Ministry of Culture and Information 2. Deputy Registrar of the Business Registers Agency, BRA			



Email and phone number	1. slavica.trifunovic@kultura.gov.rs 2. rmacukat@apr.gov.rs
Other actors involved	BIRN Serbia, Tanja Maksić (011-40-30-319, tanja.maksic@birn.eu.com) Primarily, media and journalist organisations and associations; the media; secondarily, other CSOs engaged in prevention of corruption, monitoring of budget spending and related issues

B. GOVERNMENT INTEGRITY

COMMITMENT 7: Assistance with and monitoring of adoption of LAP	
Period – Commitment Start and End Date Q2 2019 – Q4 2020 ⁵¹	
Lead implementing agency	Anti-Corruption Agency ⁵²
Description of Commitment	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	<p>Assemblies of the city of Belgrade and of cities/towns and municipalities have a duty to pass local anti-corruption plans (LAPs) on the basis of strategic documents. They also must establish mechanisms to monitor the implementation of LAPs by a body designated by the city/town or municipal assembly on proposal of a Commission which consists of persons independent from local self-government bodies;</p> <p>The following has been observed in practice: insufficient participation and visibility of the process of citizens' participation in the performance of tasks of interest for the functioning of the local community; insufficiently developed anti-corruption mechanisms at the local self-government level, as well as lack of independent monitoring of implementation of anti-corruption plans at the local self-government level.</p> <p>Local self-governments are extremely vulnerable to corruption, and adoption of local anti-corruption plans should improve systematic addressing of the issues. Adoption of these plans is largely delayed, and no authority at the central government level is authorized to address this issue by imposing measures against local self-governments which failed to comply with their duties. The Action Plan for Chapter 23 includes activity 2.2.10.37.</p>

⁵¹ Based on the Action Plan for Chapter 23, adopted in April 2016 (measure 2.2.10.37), the Anti-Corruption Agency (the Agency for Prevention of Corruption from 1 September 2020) started monitoring preparation and development of local anti-corruption plans in the second quarter of 2017. The Action Plan for Chapter 23 adopted on 22 July 2020 (measure 2.2.10.31.) sets the deadline for preparation and adoption of local anti-corruption plan at the fourth quarter of 2020.

⁵² At the time when the Action Plan for OGP was adopted, the name of the lead implementing agency was the Anti-Corruption Agency. When the Law on Prevention of Corruption took effect on 1 September 2020, the name of the institution was changed.



	<p>“Assemblies of autonomous provinces and local self-governments shall adopt local action plans and form standing working bodies to monitor and implement local action plans”. According to the most recent report available, the Anti-Corruption Agency received reports on adoption of local anti-corruption plans (LAPs) and formation of bodies for their monitoring from a total of 118 local self-government units (LSGUs) and the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina until 25 September 2018. According to the data in received reports, a total of 82 LSGUs (57% of the total of 145 LSGUs, excluding the territory of Kosovo and Metohija) adopted these plans from early April 2017, when the Agency published the Model LAP, to the abovementioned date. Of 82 adopted plans, 75 were prepared on the basis of the Agency’s Model, while seven are not in line with the Model neither by their form nor by their content. However, eleven self-government units simply copied the Model, while two have not submitted enough data to evaluate whether their LAPs have been prepared according to the Model. The remaining 62 are mostly in line with the Model, although they depart from it to as greater or lesser extent, either in terms of the document itself or with regard to its preparation. Representatives of the civil society were not included in working groups for preparation of certain LAPs, in some reports on adoption of LAP local self-government units did not appropriately explain why certain measures from the Model were not undertaken etc.</p> <p>Fifteen LSGUs designated a body responsible for monitoring the implementation of LAP, of which six were formed mostly in accordance with the Agency’s Model. Six departed from the model to a certain extent, while there is not enough data available to evaluate the compliance of three bodies.</p> <p>Six LSGUs adopted their LAPs and formed bodies to monitor their implementation mostly in line with the Agency’s Model and thus complied with their duty under activity 2.2.10.37. of the Action Plan for Chapter 23.</p> <p>In 2018, the Anti-Corruption Agency allocated funds for five civil society organisations for implementation of five projects with the aim of supporting development and strengthening of integrity, public accountability and transparency of the work of local self-government units. These CSOs will provide assistance in development of LAPs and formation of bodies to monitor their implementation, in accordance with the Agency’s Model. Limited support to towns and municipalities will also be available within donor projects. Such situation is a serious problem for all government levels, given that the time limit for adoption of such plan expired on 30 June 2017.</p>
What is the commitment?	<p>The commitment under this AP includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Development of a Model Methodology to Monitor Implementation of LAP – Anti-Corruption Agency B) Collecting data on compliance with the commitment within the context of national and European integration planning documents – by the Anti-Corruption Agency and (until competences are transferred to the Agency through amendments to the Law) the Government’s Council for Monitoring the Implementation of Chapter 23 of negotiations between Serbia and the EU C) Promotion of information on adopted LAPs and established mechanisms for monitoring their implementation – Anti-Corruption Agency. <p>The commitment contributes to higher inclusion of local communities in Serbia’s EU accession process through joint actions of local self-government, state bodies and civil society organisations as a catalyst of the reform process at the local level.</p> <p>The commitment is implemented through activities planned under the Action Plan for Chapter 23 of Serbia’s EU Accession Negotiation, as well as the Action Plan for implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (adoption of local anti-corruption plans, establishing of bodies to monitor implementation, collecting data on compliance with the commitment and promotion of good practice).</p>



	Compliance with this commitment will also help link measures implemented at the central level and at the local self-government level, which will improve communication between decision-makers and citizens and contribute to increased openness of anti-corruption reform processes and reforms implemented during negotiations with the EU.			
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	<p>Collecting and promotion of data on the implementation of this commitment by competent authorities and promotion of good practice, while highlighting examples of bad practice by civil society organisations and state bodies, can ensure that more local self-governments comply with their duties under strategic documents.</p> <p>In addition, civil society organisations at the local level have an opportunity to be more actively involved in development and monitoring the implementation of public policies at the local level through implementation of these commitments of local self-governments, which ensures assumptions for more accountable government in all fields.</p>			
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>Openness of local self-government when passing and implementing decisions and enabling civic participation are prerequisites for greater integrity of authorities at the local level, increased accountability of those authorities and opportunities for citizens and civil society organisations to become more active participants in the fight against corruption.</p> <p>The current Model LAP developed by the Anti-Corruption Agency contains numerous measures aimed at strengthening integrity, reducing scope for discretion, transparency of the decision-making process and improved openness of government bodies at the local level for civic initiatives. In addition, the Model also contains arrangements which should ensure that citizens and civil society organisations provide a crucial contribution to development of high-quality LAPs and ensuring their implementation.</p> <p>Taking into account that monitoring the implementation of LAPs should be performed by a body consisting of citizens of local communities who may not have any experience in monitoring the implementation of public policies, it is necessary to strengthen their capacities for this task. The Anti-Corruption Agency will assist them with this by developing a model methodology and documents, as well as civil society organisations which assist with the monitoring of compliance with these duties or are actively involved in monitoring the implementation of LAP in their communities.</p> <p>Implementation of this commitment will contribute to increased visibility of issues at the local level and accountability of local actors in the reform process. And, most importantly, policy-making at the local level, as part of the European integration process, will be more visible for citizens and will be more suitable for actual needs of local communities. Furthermore, implementation of this commitment will contribute to strengthening of anti-corruption mechanisms of the country as a whole, because the LAP is linked with the implementation of numerous anti-corruption laws.</p>			
Additional information (optional)				
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed



			✓	
Description of results	<p>1. The Agency, in cooperation with the Responsible Governance Project of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), developed the methodology for monitoring of and reporting on implementation of local anti-corruption plans. The methodology was presented at a conference which was attended by representatives of the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM), representatives of local self-governments and the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, members of bodies for monitoring the implementation of local anti-corruption plans and civil society organisations which provide support to local self-governments in development and adoption of local anti-corruption plans. The methodology was published on the official website of the Agency, in a special banner dedicated to local anti-corruption plans. In view of the foregoing, we can consider that this activity was fully implemented.</p> <p>2. The Agency has daily communication with representatives of local self-governments and provides consultative assistance in the development of LAPs and the formation of monitoring bodies. Communication with representatives of municipalities, in particular those with small populations, showed that formation of bodies for monitoring the implementation of LAPs very often faces difficulties caused by insufficient number of applied candidates for selection or even complete lack of applications. For this reason, the Agency prepared the Supplement to the Model Local Anti-Corruption Plan for local self-government units which describes the procedure for selection of temporary members of bodies for monitoring the implementation of LAPs in municipalities. In 2018, the Agency announced the public call for award of funds to civil society organisations for implementation of five projects for provision of assistance in development of local anti-corruption plans (LAPs) and formation of bodies to monitor their implementation, in accordance with the Agency's Model, for five local self-government units in Serbia. Projects by five following civil society organisations were rewarded, including: "Transparency Serbia", "Bečej Youth Association", "Centre for Democratic Development Europolis", "Centre for Democratic Activities" and "Bureau for Social Research". Of five rewarded projects, two were fully implemented, namely the projects by "Transparency Serbia" and "Bečej Youth Association", while three projects were partially implemented. As regards partially implemented projects by "Centre for Democratic Development Europolis", "Centre for Democratic Activities Lebane" and "Bureau for Social Research", the selected local self-government units prepared and adopted local anti-corruption plans; however, in spite of efforts invested by civil society organisations themselves, bodies for their monitoring were not formed. Local self-government units are responsible for formation of bodies for monitoring the implementation of LAPs, so, in spite of endeavours by civil society organisations, it is obvious that lack of willingness of LSGU representatives prevented completion of this process as planned. In view of the foregoing, and having in mind responsibilities of the Agency in this specific activity which implies provision of assistance to interested local self-governments in passing and monitoring the implementation of LAPs, we can consider that this activity was fully implemented.</p> <p>3. Since application of the Acton Plan for Chapter 23 began, i.e. since the Model Local Anti-Corruption Plan was published in April 2017, the Agency has been monitoring the development of local anti-corruption plans and formation of bodies for their monitoring. Data are collected quarterly from responsible entities during the year. Based on data submitted by LSGUs to the Agency, reports are prepared which present the number of LSGUs that reported to the Agency on development and adoption of LAPs and formation of bodies for monitoring their implementation together with the evaluation whether LAPs were developed and bodies formed in accordance with the Model prepared by the Agency. The reports are published on the</p>			



	<p>official website of the Agency, in a special banner dedicated to local anti-corruption plans (available at: http://www.acas.rs/lokalni-akcioni-plan/). In view of the foregoing, we can consider that this activity was fully implemented.</p> <p>4. The Agency formed a special banner on its official website where all data regarding local anti-corruption plans are regularly published, including: all documents necessary for development and monitoring of LAPs, quarterly reports since 2017 and a table for 145 local self-government units containing information as to whether they adopted LAPs and formed bodies for their monitoring in accordance with the LAP Model prepared by the Agency. These data are regularly updated after each quarterly reporting period. This ensures that interested public can obtain appropriate information on the process of preparation of LAPs in local self-government units.</p> <p>In late 2018, from 26 November to 27 December, the Agency carried out an awareness-raising campaign on adoption of local and provincial anti-corruption plans titled “LAP for Stronger Integrity”. During the campaign, citizens could see a video on the official website of the Agency and in Internet editions of “Blic” and “Večernje novosti” daily newspapers and to hear a radio clip broadcasted on local radio stations.</p> <p>On 22 November 2019, the Agency, together with the Responsible Governance Project of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), organised a conference where the Methodology for Monitoring of and Reporting on the Implementation of Local Anti-Corruption Plans was presented and which was attended by more than 30 representatives of local self-governments and the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, civil society organisations and international organisations. In view of the foregoing, it is evident that the Agency was implementing activities to promote LAPs and data on their adoption, but not as specified in the AP OGP (every six months), which is why we drew the conclusion the activity was partially implemented.</p>			
Next steps	<p>On 27 April 2016, the Serbian Government adopted the Action Plan for Chapter 23, which was developed in accordance with recommendations in the Screening Report for Negotiating Chapter 23. After four years of implementation, it was decided that the Action Plan should be revised and on 22 July 2020 a revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 was adopted. Under the Measure 2.2.10.31. of the Action Plan, assemblies of autonomous provinces and local self-governments adopt local action plans and form standing working bodies for monitoring the implementation of local action plans, and the Agency for Prevention of Corruption is competent for reporting based on data collected from local self-government units and autonomous provinces. In view of the foregoing, the Agency will continue monitoring the implementation of activities in connection with adoption of LAPs and formation of bodies for their monitoring. In addition, the Agency must develop the Methodology for Preparation of Impact Assessment of Measures Undertaken to Reduce Corruption in Local Self-Government (measure 2.2.10.32.), form a working group for preparation of impact assessment of measures undertaken to reduce corruption in local self-government (measure 2.2.10.33.) and implement and present the impact assessment of measures undertaken to reduce corruption in local self-government (2.2.10.34.). All these activities should be completed by the second quarter of 2022.</p>			
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Development of a Model Methodology to Monitor Implementation of LAP		Q2 2019 (March 2019)	Q4 2019 (November 2019)	Completed



2. Provision of assistance to interested local self-governments in the passing and monitoring the implementation of LAPs (daily advisory assistance by the Agency, assistance provided by LSGUs to five NGOs which implement projects supported by the Agency, as well as other entities within their projects)	Advisory assistance Q2 2017 (April 2017) Projects by five CSOs Q3 2018 (September 2018)	Continually, until compliance with the commitment of local self-governments and autonomous provinces ⁵³ (Q4 2020) Completion of the last of all five projects Q3 2020 (August 2020)	Completed
3. Collecting data on implementation of activities in the preparation of LAPs and publishing of such data	Q2 2017 (April 2017)	Continually, until compliance with the commitment of local self-governments and autonomous provinces (Q4 2020)	Completed
4. Promotion of data on adopted LAPs and their monitoring	Q2 2017 (April 2017)	Q4 2020 (December 2020)	Substantial
Contact			
Lead implementing agency	Agency for Prevention of Corruption		
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Maja Petrović		

⁵³ Under the measure 2.2.10.31. of the Action Plan for Chapter 23, adopted on 22 July 2020, the deadline for adoption of LAPs and formation of bodies for their monitoring is the fourth quarter of 2020, while reporting, within the sphere of competences of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption, is continual, i.e. until compliance with duties of local self-governments and autonomous provinces.



Title, Department	Assistant Director, Department for Cooperation with the Media and Civil Society
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Other actors involved	“Transparency Serbia”, “Bečej Youth Association”, “Centre for the Development of a Democratic Society EuroPolis”, “Centre for Democratic Activities” and “Bureau for Social Research”

COMMITMENT 8: Updating of electoral roll

Period – Commitment Start and End Date
Q1 2019– Q2 2019

Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government
Description of Commitment	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	As regards eligibility of Serbian nationals to vote in Serbian presidential and parliamentary elections while living in foreign countries, the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government has observed certain issues in practice in connection with the submission of requests to register with the single electoral roll as voters who will vote abroad, i.e. in their temporary place of residence, in the election. The practice used so far has revealed numerous difficulties with registering, and thus also with the processing, when requests were submitted by e-mail. This fact was also highlighted by the Ombudsman, who gave a recommendation to improve the regulations pertaining to the electoral roll so that the eligibility to vote would not be limited for Serbian nationals living abroad. In addition, since the practice used so far meant that data from other official records (registry books) which could result in changes in the electoral roll had to be sent by mail, there was a possibility that such changes would not be registered in the electoral roll in due time, which meant that the electoral roll was not always up to date.
What is the commitment?	In order to improve the legislative framework pertaining to the electoral roll, certain provisions of the Instructions on Implementation of the Law on Single Electoral Roll have been improved in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure normal exercise of the right of Serbian nationals to vote in a foreign country by specifying a clear procedure for the submission of requests to register in the single electoral roll the fact that they will vote abroad in those elections and for deciding on those requests by competent authorities; - This, in turn, requires the inclusion of a separate page in the electoral roll system which would specify the exact responsibilities of all entities involved in deciding on the requests, which would ensure legal certainty in the exercise of this right; - Ensure electronic linking of the Registry of Deaths with the single electoral roll to enable timely keeping and updating of the single electoral roll.



How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	Implementation of this commitment will, on the one hand, ensure easier, more efficient and faster exercise of rights of Serbian nationals in terms of voting of persons who are not able to exercise their right to vote in their permanent place of residence and instead vote in their temporary place of residence in a foreign country. On the other hand, the introduction of electronical linking of registers will ensure a legal and regular procedure for making changes to the electoral roll and for the passing of decisions, in order to ensure the electoral roll is accurate, complete and up to date. This would also ensure the effective exercise of citizens' rights in this field.			
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?				
Additional information (optional)				
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
				✓
Description of results	<p>Activity 1. Amendments to the Instructions for Implementation of the Law on Single Electoral Roll enabled introduction of a separate page within the electoral roll system for submission of requests to vote in one's temporary place of residence abroad, which ensured precise responsibility of all actors in the procedure for deciding on requests, and which also ensured legal certainty in exercise of this right. Voters who have their permanent place of residence abroad can submit a request to register with the single electoral roll that they will vote abroad in parliamentary or presidential elections five days before closing of the single electoral roll at the latest, through diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Republic of Serbia.</p> <p>Authorised persons in diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Republic of Serbia who received requests for registration with the single electoral roll that voters will vote abroad in the statutory manner (electronically, through a special page within the system) forwards requests to competent municipal or city administrations responsible for voters' permanent places of residence in the country. Competent municipal or city administrations submit decisions on registration of the information that a voter will vote in his/her temporary place of residence abroad in elections and indicate a polling place where the voter will vote to diplomatic missions and consular posts that forwarded requests, in the same manner and under the same procedure, for the purpose of informing voters. After passing of a decision that a voter will vote in his/her temporary place of residence abroad and registration of such information in the electoral roll, the voter is not registered with the excerpt from the single electoral roll according to his/her permanent place of residence in the country; instead, the voter is registered with the extract from the single electoral roll according to his/her temporary place of residence abroad.</p> <p>It is evident that information that the voter will vote abroad can be registered with the single electoral roll only for persons who are already registered with the single electoral roll. In case an eligible voter is not registered with the single electoral roll, it is necessary to register with him/her the single electoral roll to be able to decide on a request for registration of information that the voter will vote abroad. Requests for registration with the single</p>			



	<p>electoral roll, together with the requests for registration of information that the voter will vote abroad, are submitted to diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Republic of Serbia, which forward both requests to competent municipal or city administrations according to the most recent temporary place of residence of a person who submitted the request before he/she went abroad or the most recent temporary place of residence of one of his/her parents.</p> <p>Activity 2. New normative arrangements ensured electronic exchange of data, particularly data from registries of deaths and marriages. In order to achieve the highest level of accuracy and up-to-dateness of data kept in the single electoral roll, the Ministry provided for electronic exchange of data between the Register of Registry Books and the single electoral rolls by amendments to the Law on Registry Books, primarily data relating the fact of death and other relevant data. As regards this issue, amendments to the Instructions on Implementation of the Law on Single Electoral Roll regulated this field in detail.</p> <p>The system operates in the following manner: after registration of the fact of death in the register of deaths or the fact of marriage in the register of marriages, registrars submit reports electronically, i.e. they submit these data daily to persons authorised to keep the single electoral roll in municipal or city administrations that maintain the electoral roll. After that, authorised persons update information on voters in the electoral roll without delay, by passing decisions on deletion of voters based on their death or on the change of personal data on voters (change of surname) in these electronic records, which ensured more efficient updating of these official records. In addition to this procedure, for the purpose of achieving the highest level of up-to-dateness of the electoral roll, authorised persons who maintain the electoral roll examine <i>ex officio</i> the Register of Registry Books in each individual case because all registry books are now kept electronically, with the aim of ensuring additional control of data accuracy.</p>			
Next steps	It should be noted that the electoral roll is updated on a daily basis and since it has been established as a centralised electronic database (in 2012), authorities that keep official records, whose data have impact on completeness, accuracy and timeliness of keeping the electoral roll, primarily the Ministry of Internal Affairs, must submit data electronically, based on which officers who maintain the electoral roll pass decisions on changes in these records. This well-established and reliable mechanism for electronic electoral roll updating has now been additionally improved by electronic linking of the electoral roll and the Register of Registry Books, as already said above. Thus, the electoral roll has a developed system for electronic communication with official records that contain data which affect completeness, accuracy and timeliness of keeping the electoral roll.			
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Introduction of a separate page within the electoral roll system for the submission of requests to vote abroad		Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Completed
2. Establishing an electronic link between the Registry of Deaths and the single electoral roll – development of a web service		Q1 2019	Q2 2019	Completed
Contact				



Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Marina Dražić
Title, Department	Assistant Minister, MPALSG, Sector for Registry Books and Registers
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Other actors involved	Ministry of Foreign Affairs

C. PUBLIC SERVICES

COMMITMENT 9: Simplification of administrative procedures and regulations – ePAPER ⁵⁴	
Period – Commitment Start and End Date Q1 2018 – ongoing	
Lead implementing agency	Public Policy Secretariat
Description of Commitment	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	<p>There is no integrated database of currently applicable administrative requirements (procedures) in the existing public administration system. For this reason, economic operators and citizens wishing to start their own business often do not know where to ask or how to find information about administrative procedures and other conditions for pursuing a business activity and costs of services provided by state administration bodies. This often leads to unjustified additional expenses and waste of time for public service users. In 2016, administrative expenses of businesses equalled 3.46% of GDP. Once this commitment is implemented, administrative expenses of businesses should be cut by 15-20%, to 3% of GDP. A comprehensive and up-to-date electronic database of administrative procedures and requirements would give citizens and businesses ready access to necessary information, thereby avoiding the incurrence of these additional expenses.</p>

⁵⁴ This commitment is continuation of the commitment 14 under the previous Action Plan for 2016 and 2017.



What is the commitment?	A single public register is an objective pursued by the project implemented by the Government of the Republic of Serbia titled e-PAPER. The single public register of administrative procedures is being established in parallel with a process of simplification of administrative procedures and soliciting initiatives from businesses and citizens for changes and improvements to the existing processes. This public register will give citizens and businesses access to all administrative requirements and procedures that need to be achieved and met in order to exercise a right or obligation. The register will provide all necessary pieces of information on the selected procedures – the required documentation, the timeframe and the admissibility of appeals, including all expenses in the form of fees, surcharges etc. Simplification of the procedure, slashing of unnecessary levies and digitalisation of the most common procedures will reduce the business expenses of economic operators in the pursuit of their business activity. This will increase predictability and transparency of business. Communication with economic operators is key for compliance with this commitment, with recommendations and proposals for simplification, modification or improvement of administrative procedures, because it will be the best way to identify procedures which lead to wasteful spending of resources of economic operators, i.e. those that create the heaviest administrative burden in terms of frequency, complexity or expenses.
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	The register will be a publicly available database of all administrative procedures and other conditions for pursuing a business activity imposed by public administration bodies and organisations. Economic operators and citizens will have a one-stop-shop where they will obtain all necessary information relevant for a specific procedure, including: whether there is an application form (to download); to whom the application should be submitted and if it may be submitted electronically; what other documentation is required, in what form and whether there are steps to be completed before that (certification by a notary public etc.); what are the financial expenses (fees, surcharges etc.); the timeframe for deciding on applications; the validity term of the issued document and the possibility of appeal. Such publicly available information will help economic operators save resources, leaving them more time to focus on the pursuit of their business activity. Simplification of procedures will reduce administrative burden by eliminating obstacles to simple compliance of economic operators with their obligations, which will make the business climate in the Republic of Serbia more favourable and attractive to prospective investors.
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	Compliance with this commitment will improve the quality of public services and improve the reputation of public administration, facilitate communication between authorities and enable data exchange. The Register will contribute to greater transparency in the actions of public administration, bring about to fewer opportunities for abuse and corruption and facilitate day-to-day operations of economic operators.
Additional information (optional)	Funding for the implementation of this commitment has been secured from the following projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to improvement of the business environment, an EU Project (IPA 2013) worth EUR 2,301,120. • Improving the Business Environment, a project of the UK Good Governance Fund implemented by the International Financial Corporation (IFC), worth EUR 4,072,085. • IPA project – Implementation of the Services Directive 2006/123/EC and establishment of a single electronic contact point. The total approved amount is EUR 2,000,000 and the tendering procedure is underway. • GIZ project Support to Public Administration Reform in Serbia, worth EUR 200,000 This commitment is planned in the Action Plan on Implementation of the Strategy for Regulatory Reform and Improvement of the Public Policy Management System 2016-2017.



Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
			✓	
Description of results	<p>The following results have been achieved so far: a total of 2,618 administrative procedures were inventoried, 95 public administration bodies at the national and central levels participated in inventory; the Programme for Simplification Administrative Procedures and Regulations ePaper was adopted with the supporting Action Plan for the period 2019 – 2021, which include recommendations for simplification/cancelling of 890 administrative procedures within the purview of 50 public administration bodies; 82 procedures were simplified and 4 were cancelled, while simplification was initiated for 360 procedures, i.e. recommendations were partially implemented, which will save EUR 31.9 million for the business at the annual level; The Draft Law on the Register of Administrative Procedures was prepared, which will regulate the issue of establishing and keeping the Register, its content, the manner of use and other issues of relevance for management of the Register, so that the Register could be publicly available; a platform for e-Permits was developed and linked with all necessary services, such as e-Payment and a data highway between public administration bodies and organisations, which constitutes the basis for digitalisation of administrative procedures; electronic submission of requests and necessary documentation is available at the e-Government portal for 11 administrative procedures, which are performed completely electronically, from requests to decisions, while development of additional 26 digital services for businesses is expected until the end of 2020. Administrative burden in Serbia saw decline (calculation performed by the PPS). Administrative costs for businesses were reduced from 4.07% of GDP in 2010 to 3.11% of GDP in 2018, which shows that the regulatory reform aimed at improvement of the business environment is developing as planned (the objective set for 2020 is 3% of GDP).</p>			
Next steps	<p>The inventory of administrative procedures for citizens, the inventory of other requirements for pursuing business activities, continuation of activities on simplification and digitalisation of administrative procedures; a publicly available register of administrative procedures with a single portal containing all pieces of information on public administration procedures and services.</p>			
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. The Bill on Single Public Register adopted		May 2017– formation of the Working Group for preparation of the Draft Law	Q1 2020	Not implemented due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the parliamentary elections, the new deadline for implementation is Q1 2021.
2. Inventory of administrative procedures at autonomous province level completed		Q1 2019	Q4 2019	Completed
3. Soliciting of initiatives from businesses and citizens for modification, improvement or abolishment of procedures or ineffective regulations		Q2 2018	Implemented continually	Completed



4. 500 most frequent and most expensive procedures simplified or abolished	Q1 2018	Q1 2021	Limited
5. 100 procedures for the issuing of licences, permits etc. digitalised	Q1 2018	Q1 2021	Limited
6. Single public register of administrative procedures and other conditions for the pursuit of business activity established	Q1 2016	Q1 2021	Substantial
Contact			
Lead implementing agency	Public Policy Secretariat		
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Ninoslav Kekić		
Title, Department	Assistant Director, Sector for Quality Assurance of Public Policies		
Email and phone number	ninoslav.kekic@rsjp.gov.rs ; 011/333 4203		
Other actors involved	All public administration bodies		

COMMITMENT 10: Establishment of an e-Notice Board for all state administration and local self-government bodies

Period – Commitment Start and End Date Q2 2019 – Q1 2020	
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government
Description of Commitment	
What is the public problem that the commitment will	The Law on General Administrative Procedure sets for the procedure and ways of public service of writs on parties. One of the ways is publishing of writs on the websites and notice boards of authorities. However, many administration bodies do not have a dedicated e-notice board on their websites,



address?	which makes it difficult for parties in proceedings to find information. In addition, there is no legal certainty for parties in administrative procedures (natural and legal persons) who are served writs in this way, because they are unable to find the required documents on the websites, while deadlines begin on the date of publishing of a writ on a notice board. Furthermore, state administration bodies and LSGUs also have an obligation to publish on their notice boards other documents relating to various public calls, amendments to planning documents, public procurement; individual documents, general bylaws of local self-governments etc. are posted on them. At present, the only way to publicly serve other documents and gain access to them is on the notice boards placed inside the buildings of the relevant administration bodies, which are in practice not readily accessible to natural and legal persons and are often difficult to read due to the sheer number of documents posted.			
What is the commitment?	Implement e-Notice Boards on the websites of all state administration and local self-government bodies.			
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	In accordance with the principle of legality, protection of rights of parties and effectiveness and cost-efficiency for parties in an administrative procedure, natural and legal persons will be able to see in one place (on an e-Notice Board), free of charge, all documents served by a body on the parties. Administration bodies will be able to serve more efficiently those writs that must be publicly served under the law. Citizens and businesses will have access to all documents published in hard copy on internal notice boards by state administration bodies and LSGUs, when they exercise delegated state administration tasks within the scope of rights and duties of the Republic (including information relating to various public calls, amendments to planning documents and public procurement; individual documents, general bylaws of local self-governments etc. will also be posted). All of these will be available in one place – on an e-Notice Board.			
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	This commitment concerns improved access to information and freedom of information. It is relevant for transparency and contributes to legal certainties (a party in an administrative procedure will know they can find a document addressed to them on the website of the relevant authority). Based on documents served in this way, the party may initiate further proceedings, file complaints etc. This commitment will contribute to openness and accountability of government through the use of new technologies and innovation.			
Additional information (optional)				
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
			✓	
Description of results	<p>The Government of the Republic adopted in March 2020 the new Regulation on Office Operations of Public Administration Bodies (<i>Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia</i> No. 21/20).</p> <p>Taking into account that all pieces of information and all services are provided to citizens at one spot, the eDelivery service was introduced at the e-Government Portal, to enable electronical submission of writs to parties, instead of publishing on notice boards in premises of authorities. eDelivery</p>			



	<p>is technically independent component of the e-Government system tasked with providing notifications on the moment of delivery or submission of enactments and other reporting on actions by authorities. The eDelivery module at the e-Government Portal fully ensures application of the provisions of the Law on e-Government (<i>Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia</i> No. 27/18) relating to electronic delivery, in particular provisions regulating issues regarding certificate of electronic delivery. The module enables creation of an electronic certificate of receipt which is automatically created after receipt of a document in the Single Electronic Mailbox, and when opened by the user, the receipt of a decision is confirmed, i.e. it is considered that an electronic document was taken in person. This module supports all actions and situation in connection with delivery specified by the law providing for e-Government, and also other situations specified by special laws, taking into account that this module can be adjusted to ensure delivery specified by special laws (e.g. number of sending, deadlines etc.). All registered users of the e-Government Portal have their Single Electronic Mailbox, eMailbox, and this ensures use of the electronic delivery service. This service provides fast, simple and reliable delivery of decisions, documents and notifications to Serbian citizens from public administration free of charge. Use of this service enables both citizens and public administration to see the status of sent electronic documents at any moment. The eDelivery module was created on the e-Government Portal which contains the Single Electronic Mailbox to ensure electronic delivery/notification or certificate of delivery (in person).</p> <p>The competent authority must ensure the use of the Single Electronic Mailbox to users of electronic government services, but only after a natural person or a legal entity is registered for this purpose, when the competent authority opens an account for the user for electronic government services (the e-Government Portal, the Tax Administration portal etc.). When a natural person or a legal entity is registered to use electronic government services, the Single Electronic Mailbox is opened for him/her where electronic documents (enactments by authorities) are delivered, i.e. by registration the user agrees to receive enactments in this manner. In addition, Article 78 paragraph 2 of the Law on General Administrative Procedure sets out that public delivery includes publishing of writs on websites and notice boards of authorities. Writs can also be published in the official gazette, daily newspaper or in another appropriate manner.</p> <p>An example of the use of this service is submission of decisions on property tax: https://euprava.gov.rs/resenje-poreza-na-imovinu.</p>		
Next steps			
Milestone status	Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Working Group formed	Q2 2019	Q2 2019	Completed
2. Amendments to the Regulation on Office Operations of State Administration Bodies prepared or a new Regulation drafted	Q2 2019	Q1 2020	Completed
3. Amendments to the Regulation on Office Operations of State Administration Bodies adopted	Q1 2020	Q1 2020	Completed



Contact	
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Natalija Pavlović Šiniković
Title, Department	Assistant Minister, MPALSG – Sector for Development of Good Governance
Email and phone number	natalija.pavlovic@mduls.gov.rs
Other actors involved	Office for Information Technologies and e-Government, CSOs that are members of the OGP Working Group

D. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

COMMITMENT 11: Improving proactive transparency – Information Booklet ⁵⁵	
Period – Commitment Start and End Date Ongoing - upon expiry of fourteen months of the date of when the new Instructions come into force	
Lead implementing agency	Implementing agency for activities 1,3,4,5,6: MPALSG Implementing agency for activity 2: Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection
Description of Commitment	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	The Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, which came into force in 2004, provides that transparency in the work of public administration bodies can be achieved in two ways: proactively and reactively. Proactive transparency implies timely publishing of documents and availability of understandable information for citizens. Information booklets on the work of public authorities and their content are defined by the by

⁵⁵ This commitment is continuation of commitment 6 in the previous Action Plan for 2016 and 2017.



	<p>the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance and they include information used or generated by public administration bodies in their work. The currently applicable arrangement for publishing the Information Booklets (in <i>Word/PDF</i> formats) and the updating system lead to insufficient data, make any attempt at oversight an arduous task and provide limited possibilities for comparison of information, which reduces citizens' overall awareness of the issues.</p> <p>The results of a survey carried out by the Belgrade Open School at the local self-government unit level showed that information booklets generally tend to lack the most sensitive information, especially information about the budget, which was observed in 69% of all cases. Only 16% of all municipalities published information about public procurement, while 11% published information about awarded state aid and various forms of financial support to public and other enterprises. About a half of all information booklets of LSGUs in Serbia (47%) do not contain information about e.g. documents and requirements necessary to exercise a social security entitlement or about the issuance of a certificate of registration with the register of births.</p>
What is the commitment?	<p>The planned amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, namely its Article 39 and Article 3 that defines the concept of a public authority body and the concept of a government body within the meaning of this Law, to which category of authorities refers obligation to publish the Information Booklet, as well as amendments to the Instructions on Preparation of Information Booklets, will see the information contained in those Information Booklets reformatted with the aim of opening the data contained therein, improving proactive transparency and expanding the circle of administration bodies subject to the legal requirement of publishing Information Booklets. This will entail:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Development of a single IT system to access, process and present the Information Booklet; 2) Designing a segment of an online platform that would serve as an Information Booklet, coupled with an obligation for public authorities to publish information booklets in <i>PDF</i> format; 3) Training of employees in government bodies for the use of a single IT system; 4) Piloting the use of the application; 5) Promotion of the application (single IT system) for the public, civil sector, business sector and the media. <p>Effectiveness of the amendments to Article 39 of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance would be delayed until the online platform is designed (until technical requirements are complied with).</p>
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	<p>The planned amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, namely its Article 39 and Article 3 that defines the concept of a public authority body and the concept of a government body within the meaning of this Law, to which category of authorities refers obligation to publish the Information Booklet, as well as amendments to the Instructions on Preparation of Information Booklets, will see the information contained in those Information Booklets reformatted with the aim of opening the data contained therein and improving proactive transparency. In addition, harmonisation of these two documents would encourage the administration at all levels to open data in accordance with the "Open Data Readiness Assessment" published in December 2015.</p> <p>In order to increase civic participation, it will first be necessary to raise citizens' awareness, both in quantitative and in qualitative terms. In this context, the level of comprehensibility of information made available to citizens by the public administration should also be taken into account. Only if citizens fully comprehend information that is provided to them proactively can it be considered that citizens have been properly informed. Reformatting of the information booklets would entail changes in the data entry and updating arrangements, which in turn would have direct effects on citizens' awareness and facilitate the work of civil servants and oversight of compliance with the Law.</p>



	<p>If adopted, this measure would ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public administration bodies would be able to prepare their Information Booklets in a more efficient and faster manner because they would be prepared exclusively electronically; - Information booklets would contain absolutely all data specified by the law, i.e. there would be no incomplete information booklets - the application would not be able to close if all specified data have not been entered; - The number of freedom of information requests would be reduced because all pieces of information would be available in a single central database and because expanding the circle of persons subject to the duty to apply the law would have impact on the availability and quality of published information - Public administration would be significantly improved because all pieces of information would be available in a single central database, both for other authorities and for citizens; - Updating of data in information booklets would be improved because of the duty to register changes within a much shorter time limit; - The system used for overseeing compliance with the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance would be more efficient because oversight procedures would be more expedient and the oversight activities would be conducted to a higher standard of quality; - Interested parties would have easier and faster access to the required information, which they would be able to download in an open format, compare, cross-check and use for further analysis, research and development of various applications; - Civic participation would improve significantly, as would the <i>watchdog</i> role of the media and citizens' oversight of the work of public authorities. 			
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>The proactive transparency principle is fully compliant with the open government principles, which are also proclaimed by the OGP initiative. Timely provision of information in an open format would directly improve data accessibility, which will ensure transparency and accountability in the work of public administration and foster civic participation and influence on the work of public administration.</p> <p>Provision of information in an <i>open data</i> format would enable subsequent processing of information and easier development of services and digital solutions for certain social services or social changes (e.g. development of a web or mobile application which would provide necessary information on required documentation to citizens).</p>			
Additional information (optional)				
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
		✓		
Description of results	For activities 1,3,4,5,6:			



	<p>Implementation of these activities is based on previous adoption of amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, which is underway. Namely, after a public debate and obtaining opinions of competent authorities according to the rules of procedure, the Draft Law was at the final stage of preparation before submission to the Government. Since the term of office was expiring for the former Commissioner, the Ministry thought it would be justified to leave scope for the new Commissioner to provide his/her opinion on the Draft Law. Proposals for additional amendments to the Law submitted by the Commissioner to the Ministry in September will be subject to further review before the final text of the Draft Law is submitted to the Government for the review and deciding. Another positive effect of implementation of these procedures is the fact that the Ministry received no comment or a proposal for amendments to the Article which proposes reform of the information booklet according to the above, which undoubtedly shows the quality of legal provisions which will improve this field of access to information. It should also be noted that activities for preparation and piloting of the single information system to access, process and present information booklets were successfully implemented by the Commissioner’s Office.</p> <p>For activity 2: Amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance are being drafted so activity 2 cannot be implemented.</p>			
Next steps	<p>For activities 1,3,4,5,6:</p> <p>In accordance with policy of the newly formed Government of the Republic of Serbia, the work will be finalised on preparation of the Draft Law, adoption by the Government and implementation of other activities planned under this commitment.</p> <p>For activity 2: When amendments to the Law are adopted, activity 2 can be implemented within the specified deadline - until expiry of the second month of the date when the Law enters into force.</p>			
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance (the “Law”)		The activity is taken from the previous AP	Ongoing	Substantial
2. Passing of new Instructions on Preparation and Publishing of Information Booklets		On the date when the Law enters into force	Two months of the date when the Law comes into force	Not Started
3. Development of a single IT system to access, process and present Information Booklets			Q3 2018	Completed, the application will be operational after the



			new Instructions enter into force ⁵⁶
4. Training of employees at government bodies in the use of a single IT system	/	/	Not Started
5. Piloting the use of the application		Q3 2018	Completed
6. Promotion of the application (single IT system) for the public, civil sector, business sector and the media	/	/	Not Started
Contact			
Lead implementing agency	Lead implementing agency for activities 1,3,4,5,6: MPALSG Lead implementing agency for activity 2: Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection		
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Lead implementing agency for activities 1,3,4,5,6: Ivana Antić Lead implementing agency for activity 2: Milan Marinović		
Title, Department	Lead implementing agency for activities 1,3,4,5,6: Assistant Minister at the Sector for Human and Minority Rights and Freedoms Lead implementing agency for activity 2: Commissioner		
Email and phone number	Lead implementing agency for activities 1,3,4,5,6: ivana.antic@mduls.gov.rs , 011-2641-495 Lead implementing agency for activity 2: office@poverenik.rs , 011/3408 900		
Other actors involved			

⁵⁶ Note: Taking into account that development of a single IT system under activity 3 was completed in Q3 of 2018, and that certain new circumstances also occurred (such as amendments to the Catalogue of Public Authorities), it should be noted the developed system would require certain improvements and adjustments, when the requirements are complied with under activities 1 and 2 of this commitment.



COMMITMENT 12: Amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance⁵⁷

Period – Commitment Start and End Date	
Ongoing	
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government
Description of Commitment	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	<p>The Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance is currently being revised. The current revision aims to address certain deficiencies that have been observed in the implementation of the Law in practice.</p> <p>The Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance dates back to 2004. The Law has been praised as excellent in terms of its legislative arrangements, but its implementation in practice has revealed certain deficiencies. It has been observed in practice that there is a need to develop the Law in other directions as well, since certain issues are not properly regulated or are not regulated at all. This includes in particular the issue of proactive publishing of information by the authorities on their websites, improving and increasing the transparency of data published in the information booklets, expanding the scope of persons subject to the law, clarifying the procedure for appointment and removal from office, administrative enforcement and other amendments which would comprehensively regulate the application of the right to access information of public importance.</p> <p>The Commissioner for Information of Public Importance received a similar number of complaints in 2016 and 2017 – about 3,500 – mostly in cases of the so-called administrative silence. This shows that the legal enforcement mechanisms cannot be fully implemented in practice.</p> <p>However, the last two years saw progress in this regard, with the institution of infringement proceedings against a number of entities.</p> <p>The Special Working Group on preparation of the Draft Law Amending the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance was formed on 3 November 2016, and many meetings have been held with the competent authorities, as well as with representatives of the Commissioner's Office, at which the Draft Law was endorsed. In compliance with the proclaimed principles of transparency in the passing of regulations and involvement of the non-governmental sector in the process, a public consultation was held from 5 and 15 February 2018, where representatives of the public and civil sectors made more than 100 suggestions and proposals. A public debate was held from 22 March to 19 April 2018. It included a Round Table held on 27 March, which was attended, in addition to the members of the Special Working Group, also by representatives of state authorities, economic operators, academia and professional associations, eminent experts in this field and representatives of more than 30 civil society organisations. Many suggestions and proposals were received, and it was determined upon analysis that they can be grouped around a certain number of Articles and proposed provisions. Taking into account the importance of this law in the coming years, all these comments will be discussed in great detail through written or direct communication with the participants in the public debate and the Draft Law will be finished and submitted to the competent authorities for opinion and then presented to the Government for adoption.</p>

⁵⁷ The commitment is continuation of the commitment 7 under the previous Action Plan for 2016 and 2017.



What is the commitment?	<p>The Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance must be amended to ensure respect of the right to access information and compliance with time limits set by the law. The duty to proactively publish information should also be established.</p> <p>The future Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance must include the following provisions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure efficient oversight of lawfulness of operations of public administration bodies and other entities subject to administrative oversight and inspection for violations of the right of access to information of public importance, in compliance with the principle of independence of oversight authorities and the principles of good governance; 2. To expand the circle of authorities/persons subject to the law, both newly founded and existing which have not been subject to the law so far although their sphere of competences requires so; 3. To reduce reasons for rejecting requests because of abuse of rights specified in the Law, such as frequent submission of requests and volume of information; 4. To improve the selection procedure and termination of office of the Commissioner, the position of the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner's Office; 5. To introduce the obligation to obtain an opinion of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection in the process of passing laws, to the extent that those regulations fall within the remit of this authority; 6. To improve the situation regarding enforcement of decisions passed by the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection; 7. To bring the amount of fines in compliance with the Law on Misdemeanours and to establish a protective mechanism to ensure the achieved level of freedom of information cannot be reduced by other regulations; 8. To impose a duty on the authorities subject to this Law to proactively publish information of public importance.
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	<p>Amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance would address the issues which arose in the implementation of this Law in practice. Proper oversight of implementation of the Law and of the legal mechanism of enforcement of the Commissioner's decisions would improve the exercise of the right of access to information and would raise awareness of the importance of this right among the entities subject to this Law. In addition, amendments to the Law which would vest the Commissioner with the power to give opinions in the process of enactment of laws would ensure that the existing level of protection of rights is not reduced by other laws and regulations.</p> <p>Amendments to the Law regarding proactive publishing of information would help reduce the number of appeals filed to the Commissioner due to violations of the right to free access to information of public interest, and improve respect for the right of access to information, which is also enshrined in the Constitution.</p>
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>Improvement in the access to information of public importance through amendments of the Law will ensure a higher level of freedom of information, which is also one of the core values of the Partnership. Also, genuine advocacy of improved public administration and fight against corruption must entail transparency in the work of public authorities. The above amendments to the Law would ensure that these issues are properly addressed.</p>
Additional information (optional)	



Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
		✓		
Description of results	<p>The Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, respecting the highest international standards of cooperation between public authorities and the civil sector, set transparency of the passing of this Law as the primary objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of public online consultations (5 February -15 February 2018) – the Draft was published at the official website of the Ministry with a call for electronic submission of comments, proposals and suggestions; - Several special meetings were held during preparation of the text with competent authorities, representatives of the civil society and the Commissioner and representatives of his Office; - After online consultations on the working version of the text of amendments and special meetings, the extended public debate procedure began (22 March -19 April 2018). Taking into account a huge importance this Law has for the relation between the state and the civil sectors, the text of the Draft Law was published at the official website of the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society and the e-Government Portal, and all interested persons could submit their comments and opinions electronically and by mail to the address of the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government in Belgrade; - Organisation of a round table on 27 March 2018 in Belgrade, which was attended by representatives of more than 30 civil society organisations, members of the parliament, representatives of LSGUs, representatives of judicial authorities etc. in addition to the EU Delegation, international organisations, representatives of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and state authorities, and where a very lively and quality discussion was held on arrangements this Law should contain. The round table was attended by more than 120 participants, which clearly shows the importance the Ministry gave to the public discussion on the most sensitive issues and provision of scope to hear and consider opinions and attitudes of all who attended the event; <p>Although numerous suggestions and proposals were received, an analysis showed that they can be grouped around certain Articles or proposed arrangements. Comparing the number of received comments on certain proposed arrangements and the importance of issues they regulate, the Ministry did not submit the Law to competent authorities to provide their opinions and to the Government for adoption immediately after completion of the public debate; instead, it decided to organize another round of meetings with lead implementing agencies for those activities, to jointly find the best solutions.</p> <p>In accordance with numerous comments received by the MPALSG during the public debate both from the civil sector and the state sector and members of the Working Group, provisions taken from the Analysis prepared by the Ministry of Justice (tripartite public interest weighing test and initiation of administrative disputes by first-instance authorities) were deleted from the Draft.</p> <p>Taking into account the importance of the field it regulates, the text of the Draft Law was submitted to a wide circle of state authorities and institutions (a total of 26), while it was also submitted to the European Commission through the Ministry for European Integration. The Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government received all opinions from competent authorities and institutions, including an opinion of the European Commission (prepared by SIGMA for EC on 19 December 2018). The new Commissioner, Mr. Milan Marinović, was elected in July 2019 and the</p>			



	MPALSG provided a scope for him to provide his opinion on the Draft Law. The new Commissioner submitted new proposals in September that year, which are currently being reviewed.			
Next steps	In accordance with policy of the newly formed Government of the Republic of Serbia, work on preparation of the Draft Law and subsequent adoption by the Government will be finalised.			
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Finalisation of the work on draft amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance		Ongoing	Ongoing	Substantial
2. Submission of the Draft Law to the Government for review and adoption of the Bill		/	/	Not Started
Contact				
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government			
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Ivana Antić			
Title, Department	Assistant Minister at the Sector for Human and Minority Rights and Freedoms			
Email and phone number	ivana.antic@mduls.gov.rs , 011-2641-495			
Other actors involved	Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection			

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

COMMITMENT 13. Support to improved cooperation between public administration bodies and civil society organisations in the process of drafting, enactment and monitoring of application of regulations	
Period – Commitment Start and End Date Q4 2018 – ongoing	
Lead implementing agency	Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society ⁵⁸
Description of Commitment	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	<p>In 2017, the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society carried out its regular annual survey of cooperation between state and provincial administration authorities and independent bodies and civil society organisations (CSOs) in 2016. The survey included 63 authorities: 47 state administration authorities, 12 provincial administration authorities and 4 independent bodies. The results reveal that 22 of the surveyed authorities have an organisational unit or person in charge of cooperation with the civil society, and as many as 16 of them are state administration authorities. During the observed year, 26 of the surveyed authorities (41.3%) submitted at least one act (draft law, development strategy or action plan) to the Government and 15 of them (57.7%) conducted a public debate. There were 48 public debates in total, meaning that the average number of public debates per authority which held such debates was 3.2. Of the 15 authorities that held public debates, 14 involved CSOs, i.e. representatives of CSOs took part in the public debates on 45 acts. Evidently, national-level administration authorities tend to involve CSOs more in their public debates and the existence of resources for cooperation with CSOs correlates positively with increased participation of CSOs in more organised public debates. The authorities reported that 29 of them (46 %) had other forms of cooperation with CSOs in the passing of regulations, including provision of information, counselling, inclusion or partnership, with provision of information highlighted as the most commonly used approach. As regards inclusion of CSOs in the work of working/project groups and other temporary or ad hoc bodies tasked with drafting regulations, 17 authorities reported they had formed at least one such body which included civil society representatives; the total number of such bodies in 2016 was 48. Compared with previous surveys, the replies received for 2016 vary depending on the segment; however, they are also indicative of a need and scope for further improvement of cooperation between public administration authorities and CSOs, especially at levels below the national.</p> <p>As part of implementation of the commitments set out in the Action Plan on Implementation of the Open Government Partnership Initiative in the Republic of Serbia in 2016 and 2017, the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society held a total of 6 trainings in 2017 on application of the Guidelines for the Inclusion of CSOs in the Process of Enacting Regulations, which were attended by 108 representatives of local self-governments and CSOs in total. These included 2 trainings for employees at local self-government units (39 participants from 24 local self-governments and 5 city</p>

⁵⁸ The Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society ceased to exist after the Law on Ministries (*Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* No. 128/20) entered into force, and its purview was taken over by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue.



	<p>municipalities) and 4 trainings for CSOs (69 participants from 55 civil society organisations active primarily at the local level). The reports of these trainings, which are available at http://civilnodrustvo.gov.rs/пoчeтнa.122.html, reveal that training objectives have been attained, that the level of satisfaction with the training among the participants is high, that a moderate increase in knowledge of the issues was achieved after the completion of training and that there is a need for further improvement of cooperation between the two sectors. One of the recommendations made in those reports, as well as in the report of the Independent Reporting Mechanism on Implementation of the Action Plan for 2016 and 2017, is to continue strengthening the capacities for cooperation exactly through joint trainings for employees of public administration bodies and representatives of CSOs, as well as through the preparation of a new Manual on Application of the Guidelines for the Inclusion of CSOs in the Process of Enacting Regulations, focusing on good practice examples at the local level. In the three years of application of the Manual on Application of the Guidelines, which was developed by the Office in 2015, it has been found that certain models and levels of cooperation have become common practice in the relations between public administration and CSOs, although there are mechanisms for CSO involvement which would have to be developed further. As a result, numerous examples of good practice have been developed in the meantime for the involvement of CSOs, or the public at large, in the preparation, enactment and monitoring of application of regulations, especially at the local level, with which the general public is not familiar. It has been shown in practice that such examples can be particularly motivating and that they provide additional encouragement for other administration bodies to recognise the importance of CSOs, their potential contribution and cooperation with them.</p>
What is the commitment?	<p>This commitment comprises two parts. The first part is to hold up to 7 trainings which will be jointly attended by employees of public administration bodies and representatives of CSOs. The minimum planned number of participants in the trainings is 140, with approximately equal representation of both sectors. Representatives of public administration bodies will primarily be chosen from among employees in charge of drafting regulations and cooperating with CSOs, focusing on the managerial level, while representatives of CSOs will be selected on the basis of a public call posted on the website of the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society and the partners in the implementation of this activity. The second part of the commitment is to compile, publish and distribute the new Manual on Implementation of the Guidelines for the Inclusion of CSOs in the Process of Enacting Regulations.</p> <p>It is expected that joint trainings for representatives of public administration bodies and CSOs will allow participants to learn more about one another and put themselves “in the other’s shoes”, thereby improving mutual understanding between the two sectors and increasing the level of trust between them, which is one of the core principles and prerequisites for proper inter-sector cooperation. On the other hand, the second edition of the Manual, enriched with practical experiences gathered both by the Office and the public administration bodies themselves, will further motivate and encourage other administration bodies, including in particular local self-government units, to improve their cooperation with CSOs. Unlike the practice followed in the preparation of the current Manual, it is planned to include CSOs in the preparation of the new edition, so they could make suggestions and provide good practice examples to be incorporated in the Manual. Furthermore, it is expected that updating of the list of regulations relevant for cooperation between public administration bodies and CSOs and highlighting of their key provisions will raise awareness of the obligations, as well as opportunities for cooperation, both among public administration bodies and among CSOs.</p> <p>The overall objective of this commitment is to build the capacities of public administration bodies and CSOs to establish sustainable models and mechanisms of cooperation in the process of drafting, enactment and monitoring of application of regulations and public policy documents.</p>
How will the commitment	<p>As indicated in the description of this commitment, capacity building through acquisition and exchange of knowledge and experiences between public administration bodies and CSOs will contribute primarily to their better mutual knowledge and understanding and contribute to a relationship</p>



contribute to solving the public problem?	<p>of trust between them. Such conditions create potential for more effective application of already established cooperation mechanisms and development of new ones and contribute to greater participation of citizens and CSOs themselves in the drafting and implementation of regulations and public policies, while also ensuring their quality and more efficient application.</p> <p>Designing a proper Training Programme (activity 1) which defines their key elements (objectives, topics and work programme, target groups, training calendar, agenda etc.) is a major cornerstone for all further activities under this commitment. The central activity (activity 2), i.e. organisation and provision of the trainings, will directly concern the problem addressed by the commitment. Specifically, the one-day trainings will provide employees of public administration bodies and representatives of CSOs with information relevant for improving cooperation with CSOs and they will participate in practical exercises, which will provide them with an opportunity to apply the knowledge they acquire during the theoretical part of the training. In addition, both groups of participants will be able to learn first-hand how the other side sees their current cooperation and to jointly propose mechanisms for its improvement. When they complete the training, participants will have a clearer understanding of the importance, potential and advantages of greater public participation in the process of drafting, enacting and monitoring the application of regulations. Reports of trainings (activity 3) will specify the number of participants, the topics covered and key observations and achievements. These reports will also contain recommendations for future activities aimed at improving inter-sectoral cooperation, and the first effects of it will be visible through the evaluation forms and “knowledge quizzes” at the beginning and end of the trainings. Finally, the preparation, publishing and distribution of the Manual on Implementation of the Guidelines (activities 4 and 5) will be an additional form of support, both to public administration bodies and to CSOs, to improve their mutual cooperation.</p>			
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>This commitment is relevant for citizens’ participation in the drafting, enactment and monitoring of implementation of regulations, as a value promoted and fostered by the Open Government Partnership. Building the capacities of public administration bodies to understand the role and potential of CSOs and possible ways of cooperation with them increases their willingness for and openness to cooperation with the civil sector and with citizens in general. On the other hand, better understanding of legal and other possibilities of cooperation with public administration bodies will contribute to greater interest and involvement of CSOs, and through them also citizens, in the work of the administration and drafting of better regulations.</p>			
Additional information (optional)	<p>In its report covering the first year of execution of the Action Plan on Implementation of the Open Government Partnership Initiative in 2016 and 2017, the Independent Reporting Mechanism recommended a commitment which would involve joint trainings for public administration bodies and CSOs on ways to improve their cooperation and compiling of a Manual with good practice examples of cooperation between public administration and the civil sector, especially at the local level.</p>			
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
			✓	
Description of results	<p>In the first half of 2019, the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society, in cooperation with SCTM, implemented 7 regional trainings for employees in local self-governments in cooperation with CSOs in passing regulations and financing their programmes/projects from budget funds. Taking into account that these trainings included over 120 representatives of local self-governments and that target groups and topics of trainings under the</p>			



	<p>commitment are almost identical, it was estimated that motivation for participation in them and their ultimate effect would be very uncertain. More precisely, it was estimated that trainings would have a higher performance if they were implemented at the beginning of the next calendar year when both authorities and CSOs still plan their activities.</p> <p>In view of the foregoing, the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society of the Serbian Government held since the beginning of 2020 three trainings on the topic “Cooperation between Local Self-Governments and Civil Society Organisations in Development of Local Communities” intended for local self-government authorities and civil society organisations with the aim of strengthening their capacities for mutual cooperation. Trainings were held in Sombor, Novi Pazar and Novi Sad with more than 80 representatives of both sectors.</p> <p>Due to the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the fact that this type of training which also includes representatives of public administration bodies and of the civil society is more effective if held live, the remaining planned trainings are delayed until further notice.</p>
Next steps	One of the delayed activities is preparation of the Handbook for participation of CSOs in decision-making, the preparation of which began in January 2020. Taking into account that in January 2020 the Government, on proposal from the Office, adopted the Guidelines for Inclusion of Civil Society Organisations in Working Groups for Preparation of Proposals of Public Policy Documents and Drafts or Proposals of Regulations, the Office planned development of the Handbook for civil society organisations which would provide support to understanding of this document and legislation providing for inclusion of CSOs in the legislative process and give examples of good practice in cooperation between public administration and civil society organisations. Preparation of the Handbook is underway.

Milestone status	Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Preparation of Training Programme	Q4 2018 (December 2018)	Q1 2019 (January 2019)	Completed
2. Execution of trainings	Q1 2020. (February 2020)	Q3 2020 (March 2020)	Completed
3. Compiling and publishing of reports with recommendations	Q2 2020 (March 2020)	Q4 2020 (March 2020)	Completed
4. Compiling of the second edition of the Manual	Ongoing	Expected in Q1 2021	Substantial
5. Publishing and distribution of the second edition of the Manual	Expected in Q1 2021	Expected in Q1 2021	Not Started
Contact			



Lead implementing agency	Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Milena Nedeljkov
Title, Department	Head of the Department for Planning and Creating Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development
Email and phone number	milena.banovic@civilnodrustvo.gov.rs ; 011/3130-972
Other actors involved	CSOs, SCTM

COMMITMENT 14: Creating legal basis and implementing an electronic system for e-civic engagement

Period – Commitment Start and End Date Q4 2018 – ongoing	
Lead implementing agency	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government Office for Information Technologies and e-Government
Description of Commitment	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia guarantees citizens the right to propose laws. On the other hand, the Law on Referendums and Civic Initiatives guarantees citizens the right to propose amendments to the Constitution, laws, other regulations and general acts within the purview of the National Assembly and the assemblies of autonomous provinces, municipalities or cities, to call for referendums on specific issues and submit other petitions in accordance with the Constitution, laws and statutes. However, citizens have no means of swift, ready and simple participation in these processes. The currently applicable law from 1994 imposes very strict conditions for citizens' participation in these processes. Citizens therefore rarely opt to exercise their rights by submitting civic initiatives or supporting certain civic initiatives.
What is the commitment?	As the Law on Referendums and Civic Initiatives is currently being amended, one step further should be made and all existing forms of civic engagement should be enabled electronically. Developed online models for civic participation should be copied and citizens should be allowed to submit initiatives and/or petitions themselves, using a single platform.



How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	<p>According to a survey conducted by the organisation CRTA, very few citizens believe their personal engagement can change anything in their society and their environment. On the other hand, the same survey reported a mild increase in the share of citizens who stated a desire and willingness to actively influence decision-making processes (from 25%, in 2014 this share increased to 34% in 2016). Accordingly, it should be made possible for citizens to participate in social processes in an easy, simple and efficient manner.</p> <p>A specific aspect of this commitment is that it would allow citizens to submit initiatives and/or petitions by themselves using this mechanism, which would be forwarded to the competent institutions for discussion and decision-making if they are supported by sufficient online signatures.</p>			
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	Implementation of electronic forms of civic engagement would improve citizens' participation in the decision-making process. The existing forms of civic engagement do not keep up with the trends in terms of electronic participation and e-communications and has been shown on several occasions to be too complicated for broad civic participation.			
Additional information (optional)	The Action Plan on Implementation of the Public Administration Reform Strategy 2018-2020 provides for the commissioning of a comparative practice study and subsequent amendments to the Law on Civic Initiatives and Referendums in order to improve mechanisms for civic engagement.			
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
			✓	
Description of results	The Draft Law on Referendums and Civic Initiatives was prepared and submitted to the government for endorsement of the bill. Taking into account that the parliamentary elections were held in Serbia in 2020, the Draft Law should be submitted to public administration bodies and relevant institutions to provide their opinions after the new Government takes office, after which it will be resubmitted to the Government for the review and deciding.			
Next steps	After the Government takes office, the Draft Law will be submitted to the Government for endorsement of the bill, and after its adoption in the National Assembly preparation of relevant secondary legislations and development of an e-application covered by activity 2 of the commitment will begin.			
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Drafting and enactment of a new Law on Referendums and Civic Initiatives or amendment of the existing one to improve mechanisms for civic engagement so that the existing forms of civic engagement can be made electronically.		Q4 2018 (October 2018)	Expected in Q2 2021 (June 2021)	Substantial



2. Drafting of secondary legislation and development of e-application(s) which would accurately enable electronic civic engagement in accordance with the amended or new Law on Referendums and Civic Initiatives.		After adoption of the Law on Referendums and Civic Initiatives	/	Not Started
Contact				
Lead implementing agency	1. Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government 2. Office for Information Technologies and e-Government			
Persons responsible from implementing agency	1. Saša Mogić 2. Mihailo Jovanović			
Title, Department	1. Assistant Minister, Sector for Local Self-Government System 2. Director			
Email and phone number	1. sasa.mogic@mduls.gov.rs 2. mihailo.jovanovic@mduls.gov.rs			
Other actors involved	SDC			

The Government recommends that the National Assembly implement these activities:⁵⁹

Increasing transparency and participation at sessions of parliamentary committees of the National Assembly outside of its headquarters	
Period – Commitment Start and End Date Q4 2018 – Q3 2019	
Lead implementing agency	National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia

⁵⁹ This Action Plan also recommends that the Anti-Corruption Agency, the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection and the Business Registers Agency implement the required measures and activities.



Description of Commitment	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	Public opinion surveys and focus group results indicate there is a need to improve knowledge of the public participation mechanisms which exist under the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. An improvement in this area would help build trust in the parliament. The mechanism of sessions outside the headquarters of the National Assembly should ensure greater participation of the civil sector (citizens and civil society), to improve as much as possible access to information on the work of representative bodies. So far, citizens and civil society representatives have not sufficiently participated actively in the discussions during the sessions of parliamentary committees outside the headquarters, nor have they made sufficient use of the opportunities to make proposals and ask questions to members of parliamentary committees, national deputies and representatives of the executive who attend parliamentary committee sessions.
What is the commitment?	<p>To establish two-way communication with citizens via a separate section of the National Assembly website dedicated to sessions outside of the headquarters, in order to give citizens and representatives of the civil society opportunities to raise issues they observed in their local communities. Specifically, the National Assembly will develop a subpage through which citizens and civil society representatives will be able to contact the relevant parliamentary committee and submit their proposals or questions in this way. Parliamentary committees of the National Assembly will plan their sessions outside the headquarters on the basis of such proposals.</p> <p>Parliamentary committees of the National Assembly will enable attendance and participation of representatives of citizens and civil society organisations at committee sessions outside of the headquarters when specific issues within the purview of the relevant committee are discussed. Participation will be ensured through a contact form on the subpage dedicated to sessions outside the headquarters, which will create an opportunity for citizens and at least one representative of the civil society to attend sessions outside the headquarters.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to solving the public problem?	In line with the principle of parliamentary transparency, the general public would have access to parliamentary committees of the National Committees, which would ensure two-way communication with citizens. This would give citizens and civil society representatives an opportunity to highlight specific issues, which could potentially result in legislative amendments. Attendance at parliamentary committee sessions would enable them to participate in the discussion, make proposals and ask questions to members of parliamentary committees, national deputies and representatives of the executive who attend parliamentary committee sessions.
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	This activity is relevant for civic participation, transparency and public accountability, as values promoted and fostered by the Open Government Partnership. Implementation of the activity will lead to greater involvement of civil society organisations and citizens in decision-making, allowing them to highlight specific issues through two-way communication so that legislative provisions could be amended as appropriate, as well as to greater visibility of issues at the local level. Two-way communication promotes and contributes to greater interest and involvement of civil society organisations and citizens and awareness of the parliament's work, which is conducive to further development of mutual understanding and citizens' trust of the government.
Additional information	No additional budget funds are required to implement this commitment.



(optional)				
Completion level	Not Started	Limited	Substantial	Completed
				✓
Description of results	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The work was completed on a portal for communication between the National Assembly and citizens within the subpage of the National Assembly (development, testing, BETA version and the final version posted on the website of the National Assembly); 2. The work was completed on mapping the outcomes of all sessions held outside the National Assembly by cities and municipalities - research; data collection; application development and testing; 3. Internal guidelines of organisational parameters when preparing and holding sessions of parliamentary committees of the National Assembly outside the headquarters were prepared and submitted to the National Assembly Service for follow-up actions; 4. 11 sessions of parliamentary committees were held outside the National Assembly headquarters, including: Svrlijig - 12 February 2018; Subotica – 17 July 2018; Subotica – 18 July 2018; Leskovac - 18 September 2018; Banja Luka - 28 February 2019; Kruševac – 30 and 31 May 2019; Zrenjanin – 5 and 6 September 2019; Vranje - 27 September 2019, Stara Planina – 17 October 2019; Čačak - 31 October and 1 November 2019 and Pančevo - 15 November 2019, where representatives of civil society organisations and citizens participated. 			
Next steps				
Milestone status		Start date:	End date:	Completion level
1. Development of a portal for communication between the National Assembly and citizens within the subpage of the National Assembly (development, testing and BETA version).		Q4 2018	Q3 2020	Completed
2. Development of result mapping of all sessions held outside the National Assembly headquarters by cities and municipalities - research; data collection; application development; infographics; testing.		Q4 2018	Q3 2019	Completed
3. Development of organisational parameters when preparing and holding sessions of parliamentary committees of the National Assembly outside the headquarters.		Q4 2018	Q3 2019	Completed



4. Minimum five sessions of parliamentary committees of the National Assembly attended by at least two civil society representatives		Q4 2018	Q4 2019	Completed
Contact				
Lead implementing agency	National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia			
Persons responsible from implementing agency	Secretary General of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia			
Title, Department	General Secretariat of the National Assembly			
Email and phone number	sekretar@parlament.rs +381-11-3026-243			
Other actors involved	Office of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia UNDP Serbia, project Strengthening the Oversight Function and Transparency of the National Assembly – stage 2. Network of Serbian civil society organisations, depending on the relevant committee			

5. PEER EXCHANGE AND LEARNING DURING THE OGP CYCLE

During the third OGP cycle, i.e. in the period of preparation and implementation of the Action Plan for 2018-2020, Serbia's representatives took part in various international events to exchange experiences and knowledge related to OGP activities.

While the Action Plan was being drawn up, a representative of the MPALSG took part in the **Conference Creative Innovations towards Active Youth Participation in the Balkans**, which was held on 15 May 2018 in Skopje, under the auspices of the European Association for Local Democracy, where she presented Serbia's participation and activities in the OGP initiative, focusing on the Action Plan preparation process.

During the third cycle, members of the Working Group took part in **two global OGP summits**.

A delegation of the Republic of Serbia led by the Prime Minister took part in the *OGP Global Summit* held from 17 to 19 July 2018 in **Georgia**. The aim of the summit was to promote and exchange information and further the open government agenda, as well as to address new challenges faced by states to improve citizens' lives worldwide, with the participation of 96 countries. In the panel discussion at the official opening of the Summit, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia highlighted Serbia's achievements within the framework of the OGP initiative. At the meeting of OGP coordinators which was held as a part of the Summit, a representative of the MPALSG presented several commitments the Republic of Serbia intended to assume under the new the Action Plan. The Regional School for Public Administration (ReSPA) supported the participation of certain members of its working groups in the Summit and organised a Regional Panel Discussion dedicated to the

OGP, at which a representative of the MPALSG presented the achievements of the open data initiative in Serbia. The Republic of Serbia also had high-level representation at the *OGP Global Summit* held in **Canada** from 29 to 31 May 2019, as the delegation was once again led by the Prime Minister. At this summit, in the panel discussion *Peer-Learning for Effective Co-Creation: How Does Participation Work?*, a representative of the MPALSG presented the so-called bilateral meetings as a form of cooperation between state authorities and CSOs which has proven to be highly effective in terms of developing and defining specific commitments. Furthermore, a representative of a CSO participating in the national Working Group took part in the panel discussion *OGP in the Eastern Partnership and Western Balkans: Raising Collective Ambition*, where she spoke of participation in the OGP from a civil society perspective and the challenges associated with this process.

In October 2019, with support from the German-Serbian development cooperation project *Support to Public Administration Reform in Serbia*, implemented by GIZ, a delegation of the Government of the Republic of Serbia went on a **study visit to institutions of the Government of the Republic of Croatia** to exchange knowledge and experiences regarding civic participation in public policy-making. The multi-day visit involved discussions on various aspects and ways of civic participation, with one session dedicated to the results and current state of implementation of OGP action plans in Serbia and Croatia, which were presented by the national contact points of both countries.

At the **conference Open Government in Bosnia and Herzegovina**, which was held in February 2020 in Sarajevo, a representative of the MPALSG shared with participants from the region Serbia's achievements and results of the reforms that had been successfully implemented within the framework of the Partnership.

6. OTHER INITIATIVES, CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

6A. Other Initiatives

In an effort to make its administration a service for citizens with high standards of openness and transparency, during the third OGP cycle the Republic of Serbia made numerous positive steps forward which, while not covered by the Action Plan as such, are fully complementary with the OGP and contribute to the development of an open government.

As already mentioned in previous sections of this Report, significant progress has been made in introducing the local government level to the OGP values and the principles of open government. In this context, we highlighted the inclusion of local self-government units in the national multi-stakeholder forum on the development of the Action Plan for 2018-2020, as well as the significant number of meetings held outside of the capital city during the third OGP cycle. In addition, the third OGP cycle also brought along the **adoption of the first local open government action plans** in the Republic of Serbia, which, while not directly a part of the action plan covered by this report, can be seen as a crucial initiative directly linked with participation in the OGP.

The process of introducing local communities to the OGP values began in 2017 and 2018 through cooperation between the OSCE Mission to Serbia and the civil society organisation CRTA, together with the MPALSG. That was when the first meetings were held across Serbia and models and instructions for the preparation of local open government action plans were prepared.⁶⁰ Efforts that had been initiated in the second OGP cycle were continued in the third cycle. Thus, in late 2018, a public call was issued for the participation of local self-governments in the



development of OGP action plans for 2019-2020,⁶¹ issued by the CSO consortium supported by the OGP donor fund in cooperation with the MPALSG. This call was addressed to all local self-governments in Serbia that had demonstrated a certain level of capacity and willingness to embrace greater citizen participation and more accountable and transparent operations, the intention being to provide the highest-ranking ones with free support in the development of local action plans. Although it had initially been planned to select three of the eleven applications received, eventually it was decided that support would be provided to five local self-government units: Sombor, Novi Pazar, Lapovo, Vlasotince and Bela Palanka.⁶² The work on these action plans symbolically started during the OGP Week ceremony in Serbia, in March 2019, with meetings

⁶⁰ <http://ogp.rs/pou-u-lokalnim-sredinama/>

⁶¹ <https://ogp.rs/sprovodjenje-pou-u-lokalnim-sredinama/javni-poziv-za-ucesce-lokalnih-samouprava-u-izradi-akcionih-planova-partnerstva-za-otvorenu-upravu-2019-2020-godine/>

⁶² <https://ogp.rs/sprovodjenje-pou-u-lokalnim-sredinama/odabrano-5-jls-koje-ce-izradivati-lokalne-akcione-planove-pou-2019-2020/>

in Lapovo, Vlasotince and Sombor, and the outcome was the adoption of three local action plans: in **Novi Pazar**⁶³, **Vlasotince**⁶⁴ and **Lapovo**⁶⁵. Here it should definitely be noted that **the City of Šabac** had previously, without support from the CSO consortium, independently prepared and adopted its own action plan, as the first local self-government in Serbia to do so and the only one in the region.⁶⁶

In addition to the development and adoption of local open government action plans, another major initiative in terms of the OGP values and principles taking place during the third OGP cycle in the Republic of Serbia was the continual **public administration reform process**. It has already been stated in the introductory section of this Report that, as a candidate country for EU membership, in recent years the Republic of Serbia has been making strong efforts to reform and modernise its public administration. Given the primary aspiration to

6B. Conclusion

The third OGP cycle, which encompasses the period of preparation and implementation of the Action Plan for 2018-2020, has seen continued progress across virtually all aspects of Serbia's participation in this initiative. As regards the OGP standards pertaining to Action Plan development and implementation, the findings in this Report point to significant results in raising awareness and disseminating information on the OGP and the national activities (both regarding public administration bodies and the general public), continued progress and stepped-up cooperation with the civil society and the consultative process,

improve, through reform processes, all those aspects that make public administration efficient, accountable, transparent and a service for its citizens, in the third OGP cycle we continued implementing the Action Plan on Implementation of the Public Administration Reform Strategy for 2018-2020, through which we made additional steps towards achieving the open government principles in the Republic of Serbia. In addition, an evaluation of the current Strategy was carried out in parallel and, based on its findings, the process of developing a new Public Administration Reform Strategy for 2021-2030 is currently nearing completion. Given the set objectives and priorities, it is clear that Serbia's participation and activities in the OGP and the measures and activities envisaged by the new Strategy will continue complementing one another and will jointly contribute to implementation of the open government concept in the Republic of Serbia.⁶⁷

as well as the crucial steps towards implementing the open government principles at the local level, which resulted in the adoption of four local action plans. The Working Group, as the national stakeholder forum, achieved continuity in terms of its composition and regulated and improved its operation, which remained open to participation of stakeholders which were not formally its members throughout the entire process. Feedback was provided to all comments, proposals and suggestions and all documents created during the cycle were published on the OGP web page on a regular basis. As regards the commitments making

⁶³ <https://ogp.rs/sprovodjenje-pou-u-lokalnim-sredinama/grad-novi-pazar-usvojio-je-lap-pou/>

⁶⁴ <https://ogp.rs/sprovodjenje-pou-u-lokalnim-sredinama/korak-ka-boljoj-upravi-u-vlasotincu/>

⁶⁵ <https://ogp.rs/sprovodjenje-pou-u-lokalnim-sredinama/lap-za-lapovo-novi-sajt-i-e-salter/>

⁶⁶ See: Interim Report on Action Plan Implementation, pp. 27-28, <https://www.gradjanske.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Izve%C5%A1taj-o-pracenju-sprovo%C4%91enja-AP-POU-2018-20.pdf>.

⁶⁷ For more information on the public administration reform process in the Republic of Serbia, visit <http://mduls.gov.rs/uprava-po-meri-svih-nas/>

up the Action Plan, a major step forward has been made in terms of increasing the number of authorities responsible for implementing the commitments (from six in the Action Plan for 2016 and 2017 to 10 in the current one), which is, among other things, indicative of a better understanding of the OGP within the administration and better cooperation with the civil society, which in turn led to increased willingness of authorities to assume responsibility for commitments initiated mainly by the civil sector. Nevertheless, as the MPALSG and the OCCS were responsible for half of the commitments under the Action Plan, the next cycle should see the start of further diversification, as well as a more balanced distribution of commitments among the responsible institutions. Furthermore, this Action Plan has made initial steps towards the introduction of certain new topics and areas and/or sectoral policies; thus, the Action Plan one commitment relating to the environment and one relating to the media. In this context, it may be said that one of the lessons learned in this cycle, the implementation of which will begin already in the next cycle, is the need for greater inclusion of commitments within sectoral public policies and implementation of open government values and principles in areas that are vital for citizens, such as the environment, health, education, the media etc.

As regards implementation of commitments, a positive development is the fact that the share of fully or significantly implemented commitments has remained high (80%). On the other hand, it is evident that certain commitments, in particular those that were significantly implemented, lacked one or two activities to be fully implemented, which shows that the next cycle should focus on this aspect, with better planning of activities and timeframes. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that next steps towards implementation have been envisaged for most of the unfinished

commitments, which will enable the set objectives to be attained notwithstanding the actual Action Plan. Given that one of the commitments has not been implemented, awareness raising and promotion of OGP activities must be continued at all levels.

Finally, it should be noted that the last six months of implementation of this Action Plan coincided with the global COVID-19 pandemic, as well as that elections at all levels – national, provincial and local – were called and held in Serbia during this period, all of which certainly affected the effectiveness of participation and collaboration in Action Plan implementation, monitoring and reporting. Nevertheless, the pandemic circumstances, which affected both the implementation of the current Action Plan and the preparation of a new one which will cover the period 2020-2022, have shown that tasks and activities can be performed equally efficiently and effectively through the use of different online tools, for example online meetings.

The Draft End-of-Term Self-Assessment Report on implementation of the Action Plan on Implementation of the Open Government Partnership in the Republic of Serbia for 2018-2020 was presented and discussed at the Working Group meeting held on 18 November 2020, after which a call for two weeks of public consultation was issued.

With ongoing efforts to implement all lessons learned during this cycle and further improve all aspects of Serbia's participation in the OGP, it is expected that the fourth Action Plan for 2020-2022 would be adopted in the coming months to build on the efforts towards developing an open government and achieving open government values and principles.