



## **FINAL REPORT – SELF-ASSESSMENT**

**on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Open Government Partnership  
in the Republic of Serbia, for the period from 2020 to 2022**

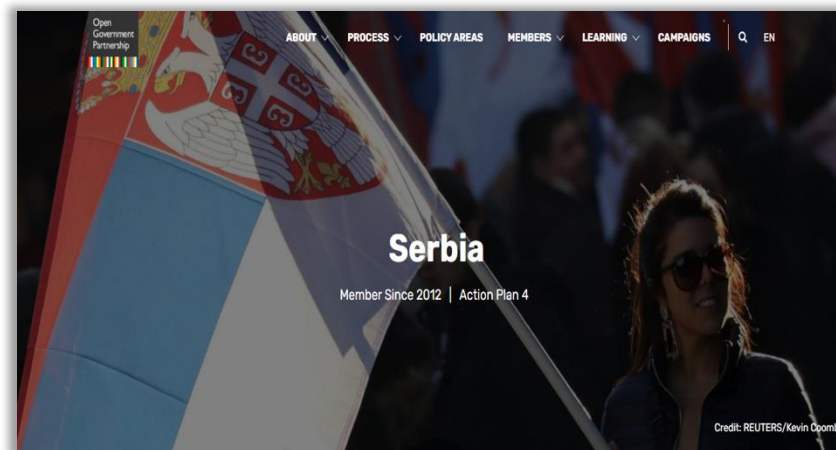
*January 2023*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Open Government Partnership (hereinafter: OGP)<sup>1</sup> is an international initiative aimed at improving the basic values and principles of open government (such as public participation in decision-making, transparency and accountability of public administration, with the use of innovation and technologies), through close cooperation between the government bodies and citizens, civil society organizations (hereinafter: CSOs), private sector and other stakeholders. Founded in 2011 by eight countries, OGP now has 77 participating countries and 106 local communities from around the world; together with thousands of CSOs, they are taking steps to improve the basic values of open government.<sup>2</sup>

The drafting and implementation of a national action plan is the most important task in a country's participation in the Partnership, as its implementation demonstrates the country's commitment to the basic values of this initiative. At the same time, these action plans represent a strong instrument for the improvement of the current situation in areas covered by key OGP values, as they consist of ambitious and concrete commitments that, once put into action, put the principles of open government into practice. Finally, the Partnership is recognized worldwide as a platform for government dialog with CSOs, businesses and citizens, that allows their needs to be identified and measures to be taken to meet such needs.

As a candidate country for membership in the European Union (hereinafter: EU), the Republic of Serbia is making significant efforts to reform its public administration towards a modern, transparent, inclusive and citizen-oriented government. These reform processes, which seek to build a “government tailored to the needs of citizens” are based on priorities defined by the Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030<sup>3</sup> and they are completely aligned to the OGP values, which they complement, contributing jointly to achieving the concept of open government. In view of this, participation in OGP and activities undertaken within it play an extremely important role and contribute greatly to the overall public administration reform process in the Republic of Serbia. In addition, national OGP processes are characterized by an intensive dialog with different stakeholders, primarily with civil society, further contributing to gaining a true perspective of the reform situation, identifying challenges, but also ways to



<sup>1</sup> The website of the OGP: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/>

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

<sup>3</sup> Public Administration Reform Strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030 (“Official Gazette of the RS” no. 42/21 and 9/22), available at: <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2021/42/1/reg.>



overcome them. Finally, given that the Partnership is also an international forum for dialog and exchange of experience, continued cooperation with other participating countries serves as an additional instrument for assessing our own results, but also learning from others' experiences.

With regards to the participation in the OGP thus far, after fulfilling the minimum conditions for participation and submitting a letter of intent,<sup>4</sup> the Republic of Serbia joined this initiative in 2012, undertaking to respect the open government principles contained in the OGP Declaration<sup>5</sup> and take action toward their improvement through the drafting of national action plans. In this respect, four two-year action plans have been adopted and implemented thus far: Action Plan for Implementation of the Open Government Partnership Initiative in the Republic of Serbia for 2014 and 2015 (“Official Gazette of the RS” no. 14/14), Action Plan for the Implementation of the Open Government Partnership Initiative in the Republic of Serbia for 2016 and 2017 (“Official Gazette of the RS” no. 93/16), Action Plan for the Implementation of the Open Government Partnership Initiative in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2018-2020 (“Official Gazette of the RS” no. 105/18), as well as the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Open Government Partnership Initiative in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2022 (“Official Gazette of the RS” no. 157/20), which is the subject of this report.<sup>6</sup> From the perspective of the commitments contained in the action plans so far, participation in OGP has significantly contributed to the improvement of the legal framework in some areas, such as public participation in decision-making, financing of CSOs from the state budget and free access to information of public importance, but it was also a driving force for topics such as the digitalization of public services and open data. By giving public administration digitalization and data opening high priority within public administration reform, Serbian Government placed a particular emphasis on the use of modern technologies and innovations as a special value of the OGP. Among others, Open Data Portal,<sup>7</sup> e-Consultations Portal<sup>8</sup> and the Register of Administrative Procedures<sup>9</sup> were established through the implementation of commitments.

In relation to the action plan that is the subject of this report, it is important to note that it has achieved continuity, despite the entire cycle of its drafting and implementation taking place in very specific and complex circumstances. In fact, from the beginning of 2020 (when drafting started) to the end of August 2022 (when the implementation was complete), two parliamentary elections had been held, and the entire cycle was accompanied by a number of challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Such circumstances have inevitably affected the quality and ambition of the commitments contained in the Action Plan, but also the efficiency and dynamics of the implementation of activities in this process, including commitment implementation.

It is also important to point out that at the end of 2021 the OGP adopted new *OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards*<sup>10</sup>, which came into force on 1 January 2022, i.e. at the moment when the Action Plan in question was already in the implementation phase. This fact should be taken into account when considering the findings of the report, especially given the need for the Report to contain an overview of the fulfilment of the relevant standards regarding

<sup>4</sup> Government Conclusion 05 Number: 345-03-1758/2012 Dated 16 March 2012

<sup>5</sup> OGP Declaration, available at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/process/joining-ogp/open-government-declaration/> (English version); <http://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/deklaracija-ogp.doc?script=lat> (Serbian version)

<sup>6</sup> The above action plans, as well as all self-assessment reports on their implementation, are available at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/members/serbia/> and <https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1> (section: Implemented Action Plans).

<sup>7</sup> Open Data Portal, available at: <https://data.gov.rs/sr/>.

<sup>8</sup> eConsultations Portal, available at: <https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/>.

<sup>9</sup> Register of Administrative Procedures Portal, available at: <https://rap.euprava.gov.rs/privreda/home>.

<sup>10</sup> OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards, available at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-participation-co-creation-standards/>.



the process of Action Plan drafting and implementation. In other words, the new standards could not be fully taken into account and implemented throughout the cycle, as their implementation started a year after the adoption of the Action Plan, i.e., after the first year of its implementation.

The report was prepared by the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, as the coordinator of national activities within the scope of Serbia's participation in OGP, based on the contributions of the public administration bodies responsible for the implementation of the obligations under the Action Plan.

## **2. THE PROCESS OF DRAFTING AND IMPLEMENTING THE ACTION PLAN**

Serbian Government adopted the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Open Government Partnership Initiative in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2022 (hereinafter: Action Plan) at its session held on 24 December 2020<sup>11</sup>, upon the proposal submitted by the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government (hereinafter: MPALSG), which continued to act as the coordinator of Serbian participation in OGP in this cycle, as well. The Action Plan contains 12 commitments aimed at improving the situation in different areas of public administration work, related to the basic values of the OGP.

Within the fourth cycle, which included the period of development and implementation of the Action Plan in question, the Republic of Serbia continued its efforts to improve all aspects of participation in the OGP. However, as was pointed out in the Introduction, two parliamentary elections were held during this period, on 21 June 2020 and 3 April 2022, and the Covid-19 pandemic also occurred in this period, which had an impact on all activities within this cycle.

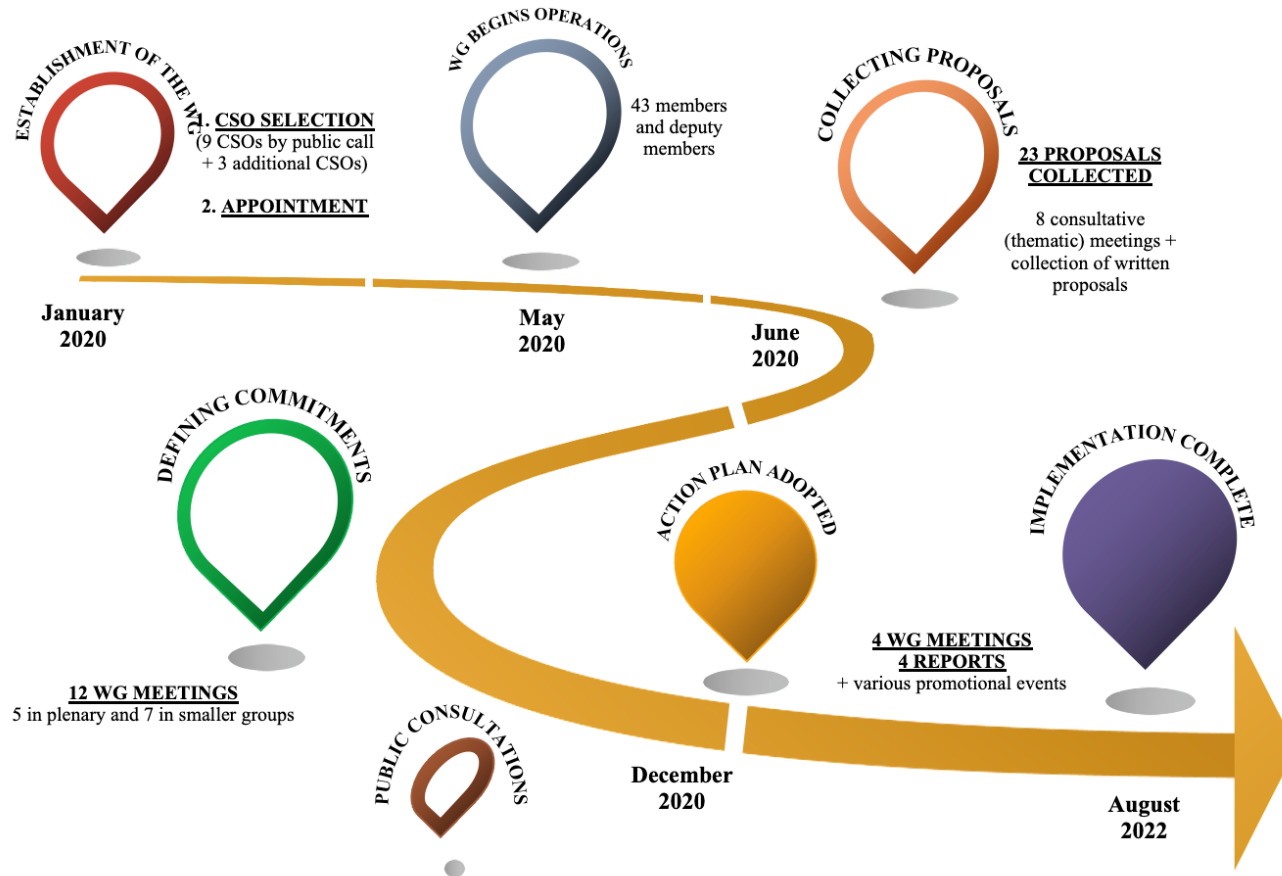
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<sup>11</sup> Government Conclusion 05 no: 021-10852/2020 dated 24 December 2020



## THE FOURTH OGP CYCLE IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

(January 2020 – August 2022)



## 2.1. Participation and joint work during the drafting of the Action Plan

With regards to the above *Participation and Co-creation Standards*, **the Republic of Serbia has met the prescribed standards**, both those that apply to the OGP cycle overall (*Standard 1 and 2*), and those related to the process of drafting the Action Plan (*Standard 3 and 4*).

When it comes **to establishing a space for ongoing dialog and cooperation between government, civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders** (*Standard 1*), at the beginning of the cycle **a Working Group was established, comprised of representatives of the government and NGO stakeholders; cooperation and dialog on all activities took place within this Working Group, through its regular meetings, in line with the adopted and publicly available rules defined in the Rules of Procedure.**

In this regard, the Action Plan drafting process was officially launched in May 2020 with the establishment of **a Special inter-ministerial working group for the drafting of the fourth Action Plan for the period from 2020 to 2022 and the participation of the Republic of Serbia in the Open Government Partnership Initiative** (hereinafter: Working Group) as **a forum of stakeholders**, in accordance with OGP standards. The Working Group had 43 members and as many deputy members, and included representatives of several relevant ministries, special organizations, Government services, independent bodies, Strategic Project Implementation Unit – IT and eGovernment – Cabinet of the Prime Minister, National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, Chamber of Commerce, donor community, five local self-government units (hereinafter: LSGs) and City Municipalities (the Cities of Sombor, Novi Pazar, Šabac, Municipality of Vlasotince and City Municipality of Vračar), as well as nine CSOs. When it comes to gender representation, the Working Group was structured to ensure a high percentage of women (out of a total of 86 members and their deputies, 48 were women, which makes 55.8%). In addition, the inclusion of representatives of the Chamber of Commerce of Serbia was aimed at promoting this initiative and the involvement of the private sector. Working group tasks included: preparation of an Action Plan draft, implementation of the consultation process with civil society at all stages of drafting, monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan and compliance with the foreseen deadlines, proposing amendments and additions to the Action Plan, as well as elaborating interim and final reports on Action Plan implementation.<sup>12</sup>

In line with the practice established in previous cycles, **CSO representatives were elected through a transparent and inclusive procedure based on a public call**, which the MPALSG conducted in cooperation with the then-active Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society (hereinafter: OCCS).<sup>13</sup> The call for all interested CSOs, announcing the beginning of a new OGP cycle, was published in January 2020 on MPALSG<sup>14</sup> and OCCS<sup>15</sup> websites and social media profiles, while OCCS made an additional call through its mailing list, to all CSOs on that list. Criteria defined with the aim to get CSOs, which work

<sup>12</sup> Decision on the establishment of a Special inter-ministerial working group for the drafting of the fourth Action Plan for the period from 2020 to 2022 and the implementation of the Republic of Serbia's participation in the Open Government Partnership Initiative, available at: <https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1> (section: Implemented action plans).

<sup>13</sup> The Civil Society Cooperation Office ceased to exist on the day the Law on Ministries ("Official Gazette of the RS", no. 128/20) came into force, and its competence was taken over by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialog.

<sup>14</sup> Public call to CSOs to participate in the Working Group, available at: <http://mduls.gov.rs/obavestjenja/partnerstvo-za-otvorenu-upravu-javni-poziv-za-ocd-za-ucesce-u-radnoj-grupi-za-izradu-akcionog-plana-2020-2022-godine/?script=cir>.

<sup>15</sup> Since the OCCS has since ceased to exist, the website of this Government service is no longer available.



in the relevant fields and have appropriate project experience and expertise in different fields within the OGP basic values, involved in the work of the Working Group and the drafting of the Action Plan, were an integral part of the public invitation, in addition to other relevant information. Adequate criteria were necessary to ensure efficiency in the work of the Working Group, considering that more than 34,500 associations and over 900 foundations and endowments<sup>16</sup> operating in different areas had been registered in the Republic of Serbia at the time. On the other hand, in order to encourage a wider participation of civil society and to expand the circle of potential members of the Working Group coming from CSO ranks, the **criteria were significantly relaxed compared to previous action plan drafting cycles**, i.e., they were defined to include minimum standards showing CSO activity in the fields related to OGP values. In addition, **the application process itself was also simplified**<sup>17</sup>.

The public call was open from 30 January to 14 February 2020, after which the Commission, made up of OCCS and MPALSG representatives adopted a Decision on the CSOs nominated for membership in the Working Group, proposing to the Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government **the appointment of representatives of all CSOs who had responded to the public call**. The final decision on the proposed CSO members in the Working Group was published on the MPALSG<sup>18</sup> and OCCS<sup>19</sup> websites and sent to the participants in the public call. **Representatives of nine CSOs were selected as Working Group members** (a total of 18 members and deputy members): Belgrade Open School (Belgrade), BIRN Serbia (Belgrade), Media and Reform Centre (Niš), Monitor (Novi Pazar), National Decentralization Coalition (Niš), Partners for Democratic Change Serbia (Belgrade), Citizens' Association for Democracy and Civic Education “Civic Initiatives” (Belgrade), Centre for Democracy Foundation (Belgrade), Centre for Political Research (Prijepolje). In addition,

**30. ЈАНУАРА 2020. ПАРТНЕРСТВО ЗА ОТВОРЕНУ УПРАВУ: ЈАВНИ ПОЗИВ ЗА ОЦД ЗА УЧЕШЋЕ У РАДНОЈ ГРУПИ ЗА ИЗРАДУ АКЦИОНОГ ПЛАНА 2020-2022. ГОДИНЕ**

— Обавештења

Министарство државне управе и локалне самоуправе и Канцеларија за сарадњу са цивилним друштвом Владе Републике Србије упућују **Јавни позив организацијама цивилног друштва за подношење кандидатуре за чланство у Посебној међуминистарској радној групи за израду Акционог плана за спровођење иницијативе Партнерство за отворену управу у Републици Србији за период 2020 – 2022. године.**

**Основни задаци** Посебне међуминистарске радне групе су, између осталог, израда Акционог плана за спровођење иницијативе Партнерство за отворену управу у Републици Србији за период од 2019-2020. године, спровођење поступка консултација са цивилним друштвом, праћење спровођења активности дефинисаних претходним и текућим акционим планом и поштовање предвиђених рокова, предлагање измена и допуна Акционог плана, израда привремених и коначних извештаја о спровођењу активности из претходног и текућег акционог плана.

**Право учешћа** на јавном позиву имају здружења и друге организације цивилног друштва основане и регистроване согласно позитивним прописима Републике Србије које делују у некој од области утврђених овим јавним позивом.

Преузмите:

- Јавни позив
- Анекс 1 – Пријавни формулар
- Анекс 2 – Образац о реализованим пројектима
- Анекс 3 – Образац о објављеним публикацијама

**Results of the public call for participation of CSOs in the Working Group**

<sup>16</sup> Information on the number of associations, foundations and endowments was obtained from the website of the Business Registers Agency on 23 November 2020.

<sup>17</sup> In that sense: the number of required years of existence of a CSO was decreased from at least three years in the previous cycle, to at least one year; previous experience in working groups and other operative and advisory bodies formed by public administration bodies and membership in a network or other association of CSOs have become preferable, rather than qualifying criteria: they are further evaluated, but applications are not rejected if they fail to meet this criteria as was the case in previous cycles; to encourage greater inclusion of CSOs with seats outside of the capital and to introduce the local perspective closest to citizens in recognizing problems and taking measures through the Action Plan, additional credits for CSOs coming from outside of Belgrade were introduced as a measure of affirmative action in this direction; the application process itself has been simplified, and has now been fully digitalized, instead of submission of documents by regular mail which was the previous requirement; evidence of fulfillment of the criteria on which there are official records (such as the registration in the relevant register or statute, i.e. the act on association of the CSOs) was verified *ex officio* by the selection commission, rather than having the documents submitted by applicants, as was the case in previous cycles.

<sup>18</sup> Results of the public call for participation of CSOs in the Working Group, available at: <http://mduls.gov.rs/obavestenja/partnerstvo-za-otvorenu-upravu-izabrane-ocd-u-radnu-grupu-za-izradu-novog-akcionog-plana/?script=cir>

<sup>19</sup> Since the OCCS has since ceased to exist, the website of this Government service is no longer available.



**the Working Group remained open to the participation of all interested organizations throughout the entire process of drafting and implementing the Action Plan;** thus, the Working Group was subsequently joined by representatives of **CSOs that submitted commitment proposals during the consultation process.** Namely, three parties that submitted commitment proposals from civil society ranks – Association of Lawyers AEPA, Young Researchers of Serbia and Association Team 42 – were duly invited to Working Group meetings where proposals were considered in plenary sessions, while the representatives of the Association of Lawyers AEPA and Young Researchers of Serbia also participated in the meetings of a smaller group of Working Group members, at which their proposals were discussed in more detail with the competent public administration bodies.<sup>20</sup> In this way, **the total number of CSOs participating in the work of the Working Group was 12, which is double compared to the previous cycle when there were six, of which a third were CSOs from outside the capital (five out of 12).**

As for the operation of the Working Group, its composition and tasks are defined in the **Decision on the establishment of the Working Group**, while the working and decision-making procedures are set out in the **Rules of Procedure of the Working Group**, adopted at its first meeting held on 19 May 2020. Both documents are publicly available.<sup>21</sup> It is particularly important to emphasize that the Rules of Procedure prescribe that the Working Group **adopts decisions by consensus**, which means that no member of the Working Group may be “against” a decision for it to be adopted. This solution is particularly important in view of the uneven number of representatives of the government and civil society in the Working Group, which cannot be balanced since the participation of a large number of different state bodies is necessary, as they are important for the implementation of the OGP values. In other words, consensus-based decision-making allows all members, including representatives of the CSOs, to prevent any decision being taken if they consider it to be contrary to OGP principles. In addition, throughout the cycle, **the Working Group was open to written comments, proposals and suggestions**, allowing for “remote” participation of both members and non-members. Finally, **all meetings of the Working Group, except the last, were held online**, which also enabled remote participation.

During the entire fourth cycle, **the Working Group met regularly**, as confirmed by the number of meetings held. Namely, the **Working Group met 16 times in total**, of which nine plenary meetings and seven of smaller groups were held, which is 4 meetings more than in the previous cycle. More precisely, **within the drafting of the Action Plan, a total of 12 meetings** were held during 2020: **five plenary meetings of the Working Group** (19 May, 11 August, 14 August, 18 November and 30 November) and **seven meetings of the Working Group members in smaller groups**, where some of the commitment proposals were considered with the participation of those submitting the proposal and the competent authorities (three with representatives of the Ministry of Environmental Protection: 28 August, 15 September and 19 November; one with the representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Information on 3 September; one with a representative of the Education Team in the Prime Minister's Cabinet on 23 September; one with the representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency on 30 September; and one with the representatives of the SCTM on 6 October). The practice of holding a Working Group meeting in a smaller group has proved to be very effective in the previous cycle and has become an integral part of the Action Plan drafting process,

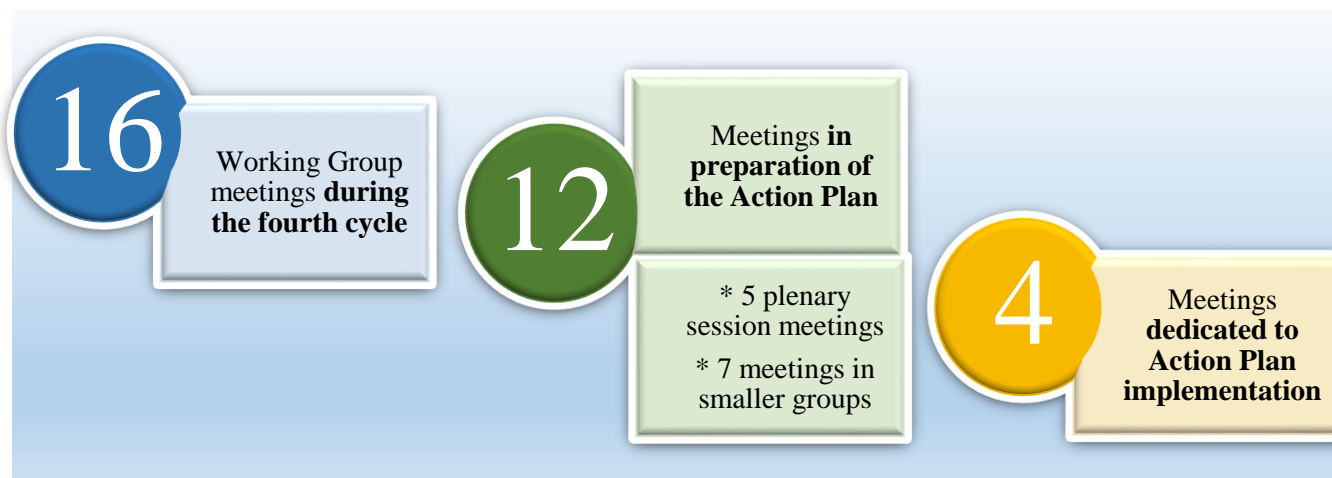
<sup>20</sup> In addition to these CSOs, three other CSOs – Environmental Protection Engineers, the Right to Water and CEKOR – participated in the meeting of a smaller group of Working Group members with representatives of the Ministry of Environment, held to discuss the improvement of citizen participation in environmental decision-making.

<sup>21</sup> Decision on establishment of the Working Group and the Rules of Procedure of the Working Group, available at: <https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1> (section: Implemented Action Plans).



to improve the efficiency of the Working Group, which has to bring together a large number of members in its plenary sessions, but also to discuss specific topics and proposed commitments in more detail. On the other hand, **four Working Group meetings were held during the implementation period of the Action Plan** during 2021 and 2022, where progress made in the implementation of commitments contained in the Action Plan was considered. In addition, the implementation of the Action Plan was the subject of various events held under the commemoration of the OGP Week 2021 and 2022, which will be discussed in detail in a dedicated section of this Report below.


**The minutes of all Working Group meetings were regularly published and are publicly available**, allowing continued monitoring over the Action Plan drafting process and, subsequently, its implementation.<sup>22</sup>



*Working Group meetings during the fourth OGP cycle in the Republic of Serbia*

**OGP MINIMUM STANDARD 1.1.**

“A space is established for ongoing dialog, with the participation of the representatives of government, civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders, as appropriate, who meet regularly (at least once every six months). Its basic Rules of Procedure are public.”

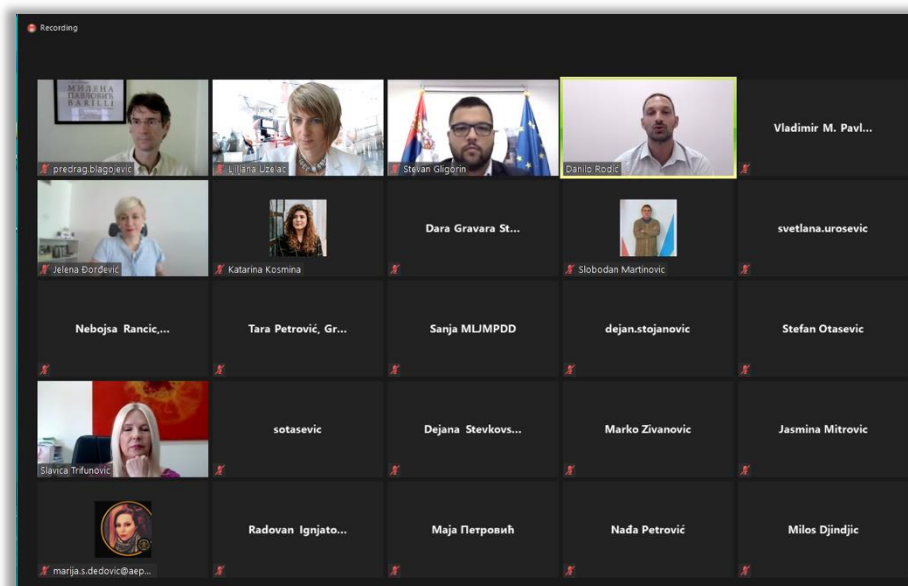


<sup>22</sup> Working Group meetings minutes, available at: <https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1> (section: Implemented Action Plans).

To ensure stronger political support, but also to further enhance cooperation with CSOs and high-level dialog on OGP activities, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted a new **Decision on the establishment of a Public Administration Reform Council** in June 2021, with tasks including “**monitoring and considering issues related to the participation of the Republic of Serbia in the Open Government Partnership, initiating and proposing to the Government measures and activities related to the improvement of implementation of this initiative, as well as its promotion.**”<sup>23</sup> In practice, this means that this advisory body of the Government, established at the highest, ministerial level, will consider both issues related to OGP, including the processes of drafting and implementing action plans, but also potential challenges in the work of the Working Group. In this way, steps have also been taken to implement one of the key recommendations of the Independent Reporting Mechanism, which will be further discussed below.

### STANDARD 1.

- ✓ The Forum of Stakeholders (Working Group) was established and met regularly – **16 meetings throughout the cycle** (4 more than in the previous cycle);
- ✓ 12 CSOs participated in Working Group deliberations (9 CSOs selected through public call + 3 CSOs joining later) – **double the number compared to the previous cycle**;
- ✓ The rules governing Working Group operation defined in the **Rules of Procedure** – decision-making by consensus;
- ✓ **Working group open to “remote” participation** – *online* meetings and written comments;
- ✓ **Working Group meetings minutes publicly available**;
- ✓ Issues related to OGP included in the mandate of the **Public Administration Reform Council**.



*Sixth Working Group meeting  
(29 July 2021)*

<sup>23</sup> Decision on Establishment of the Public Administration Reform Council (“Official Gazette of the RS” no. 56/21), available at: <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/odluka/2021/56/4>.



When it comes to **providing open, accessible and timely information on activities and progress within participation in OGP** (*Standard 2*), different channels of communication with the public were used throughout the fourth cycle to disseminate information, but also to raise awareness of OGP and the activities undertaken. In this regard, MPALSG and the then-active OCCS websites were used regularly, as well as social media profiles of these bodies and the OCCS mailing list.

To improve this segment, the MPALSG **created a special section on the eConsultations Portal dedicated to activities undertaken in the context of participation in OGP**.<sup>24</sup> The primary purpose of this section is to ensure that all relevant information on this initiative and the participation of the Republic of Serbia in it thus far can be found in one place, including all information necessary to participate in the drafting, implementation and monitoring of the implementation of national action plans. Accordingly, the Portal contains:

- **A section on OGP**, with basic information on the initiative and Serbian participation, including information on the national contact person;
- **A bulletin board**, to publish current calls and other relevant information;
- The section **Documents**, containing all documents related to the current OGP cycle (instructions, information on the Working Group, including its composition and tasks, minutes from the Working Group meetings, reports on implementation of the Action Plan);
- **Sections for the stakeholders' participation** in drafting and monitoring of implementation of action plans (*Proposals, Consultations on the Action Plan, Reports, Statistics*);
- The section **Implemented Action Plans**, comprising all national action plans that had been adopted and implemented so far, as well as all reports on their implementation – both self-assessment reports and reports made by the Independent Reporting Mechanism.

The screenshot shows the website eKonsultacije.gov.rs. The main heading is 'Партнерство за отворену управу' (Partnership for Open Government). Below it, there is a section titled 'ШТА ЈЕ ПОУ?' (What is OGP?). The text describes the OGP as an international initiative aimed at improving governance through transparency and accountability. It mentions that the initiative was formally launched in 2011 and now involves 77 countries and 106 local communities. The text also states that the Republic of Serbia has participated in the OGP since 2012, and that it has implemented four action plans. At the bottom, it provides the national contact person for OGP: 'OGP Section on the eConsultations Portal' with the email 'jana.brajovic@mduls.gov.rs'.

<sup>24</sup> A section dedicated to OGP on the eConsultations Portal, available at: <https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1>.

A particularly important option that this section provides is a chance for the interested public to take part in the drafting and monitoring of the implementation of national action plans by digital means, saving on resources and decreasing the burden on participants in these processes, which, as a rule, require the usual methods of consultations in the form of round tables and other forms of consultation meetings. The software solution created thus represents a single platform for dialog on priorities and implementation of the values and principles of “open government”; it also contributes to a more efficient and transparent process of elaboration and implementation of national action plans.

**The OGP section on the eConsultations Portal was regularly updated during the fourth cycle with all current information; it represents a repository as provided in the OGP standards,** since it contains all documents related to the current process, including minutes from meetings based on which the process of creation and implementation of the Action Plan can be monitored.

In addition, throughout the OGP cycle, news on the ongoing or implemented activities within the national OGP cycle, and on other national efforts directed at achieving open government, were published regularly on the MPALSG website. Moreover, for the purpose of promoting the Partnership and activities undertaken, but also for reaching as wide an audience as possible and encouraging participation in the development, implementation and monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan, modern ways of communicating through *Facebook, Twitter*

#### STANDARD 2.

- ✓ **The OGP section on the eConsultations Portal** has been elaborated and launched: <https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1>;
- ✓ The OGP section on the eConsultations Portal contains **all relevant information and documents that allow monitoring of the Action Plan elaboration and implementation, and it is regularly updated;**
- ✓ **A number of videos have been produced and released** for the purposes of information, i.e. to raise awareness of the OGP and the current Action Plan.

#### OGP MINIMUM STANDARD 2.1.

“A publicly available website dedicated to the participation in OGP exists and is regularly maintained and updated.”



#### OGP MINIMUM STANDARD 2.2.

“The publicly available document repository on the OGP website, which provides access to documents related the OGP process, including, at least, information and evidence of the process of co-creation and implementation of commitments, shall be maintained and regularly updated (at least twice a year).”





and *YouTube* social networks were used, featuring audio-visual and other similar materials. In this respect, several animated videos dedicated to the Partnership were also created and published via *YouTube*.<sup>25</sup>

Regarding **the provision of inclusive and informed opportunities for public participation during the co-creation of the Action Plan (Standard 3)**, certain improvements have also been made compared to the previous cycle, meaning that the defined OGP standards have been met in this segment as well.

Because of the extraordinary circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this Action Plan was elaborated through digital communication, so most of the consultation meetings with the CSOs, as well as the Working Group meetings, were held *online* using the *Zoom* platform. In accordance with OGP principles, with a view to ensure the widest consultation process possible and the inclusion of all interested CSOs, **at the very beginning of the Action Plan development, when first identifying priorities and commitments to be included in the planned document, the MPALSG, in cooperation with the OCCS, organised a series of consultative meetings**. A public invitation to these meetings, with accompanying instructions and forms, was published on 5 June 2020, 14 days prior to the first consultations, on the websites of MPALSG<sup>26</sup> and OCCS<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> Video materials dedicated to OGP promotion and the current Action Plan, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@ministarstvodrzanupravei5629/videos>.

<sup>26</sup> Public invitation to CSOs to participate in consultations, available at: <http://mduls.gov.rs/obavestenja/partnerstvo-za-otvorenu-upravu-konsultativni-sastanci-u-izradi-novog-akcionog-plana/>.

<sup>27</sup> Since the OCCS has since ceased to exist, the website of this Government service is no longer available.

Within this public invitation, documents were also published that allowed interested parties to be informed in more detail and gain insight into action plan elaboration process, OGP values and ways to participate in the upcoming Action Plan drafting activities – instructions for drafting the Action Plan, Guide to OGP Values, Report of the Independent Mechanism of Reporting on the design of the current Action Plan for the period 2018-2020, as well as forms for defining commitment proposals and submitting written proposals.

### OGP MINIMUM STANDARD 3.1.

“The co-creation timeline and overview of the opportunities for stakeholders to participate are published on the websites at least two weeks before the start of the action plan development process.”



The consultation process, as a mechanism for collecting commitment proposals from all stakeholders, was implemented through a number of online consultation meetings, as well as through the collection of written contributions.

#### 5. ЈУНА 2020. ПАРТНЕРСТВО ЗА ОТВОРЕНУ УПРАВУ: КОНСУЛТАТИВНИ САСТАНЦИ У ИЗРАДИ НОВОГ АКЦИОНОГ ПЛАНА

— Обавештења

Министарство државне управе и локалне самоуправе започело је активности у оквиру процеса израде четвртог Акционог плана за спровођење иницијативе Партнерство за отворену управу у Републици Србији за период од 2020-2022 године. У циљу реализације ових активности основана је Посебна међуминистарска радна група коју чине представници органа државне управе, служби Владе Републике Србије, посебних организација, независних државних органа, Народне скупштине Републике Србије, Привредне коморе Србије, јединица локалне самоуправе, као и представници **девет организација цивилног друштва** изабраних путем јавног позива у сарадњи Министарства и Канцеларије за сарадњу са цивилним друштвом.

Ради обезбеђивања што ширег консултативног процеса и укључивања свих заинтересованих организација цивилног друштва на самом почетку израде Акционог плана, када се утврђују приоритети и обавезе које ће се укључити у планирани документ, Министарство државне управе и локалне самоуправе у сарадњи са Канцеларијом за сарадњу са цивилним друштвом организује серију консултативних састанака.

Имајући у виду околности и мере превенције услед епидемије изазване вирусом COVID-19, а у циљу заштите здравља свих учесника, консултативни састанци биће одржани online, путем zoom апликације.

Како би дискусија била што ефикаснија и уз довољно времена да сви учесници изнесу своје предлоге, одржавање састанака организовано је по темама (областима) које одговарају основним вредностима Партнерства за отворену управу. Поред тога, у циљу препознавања потреба и подстицања учешћа организација цивилног друштва које се баве јавним политикама у области здравља, заштите животне средине, културе, медија, образовања и младих, у овом циклусу израде Акционог плана уведени су посебни консултативни састанци на наведене теме.

У складу са претходним, распоред консултативних састанака је следећи:

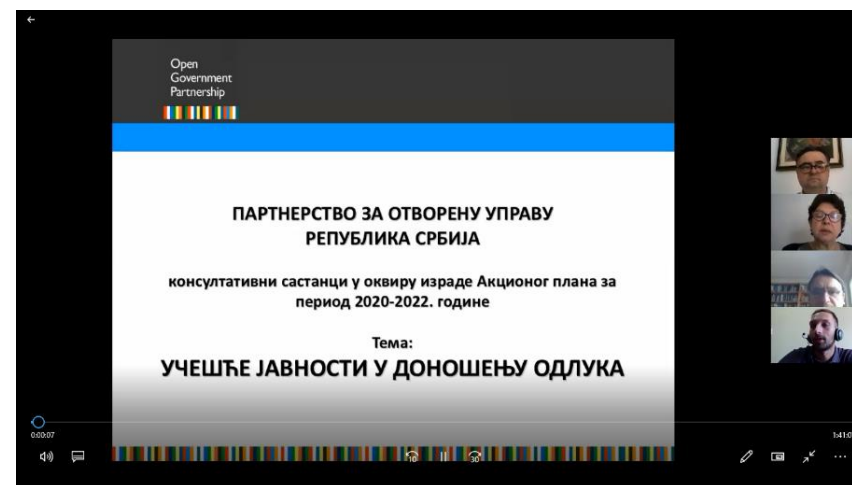
- 19. јун 2020, 11:30-13:00 – Тема: Учешће јавности у доношењу одлука
- 19. јун 2020, 14:00-15:30 – Тема: Култура и медији
- 22. јун 2020, 11:30-13:00 – Тема: Приступ информацијама, отворени подаци и
- 22. јун 2020, 14:00-15:30 – Тема: Здравље и животна средина
- 23. јун 2020, 11:30-13:00 – Тема: Јавне услуге
- 23. јун 2020, 14:00-15:30 – Тема: образовање и омладинска политика
- 24. јун 2020, 11:30-13:00 – Тема: Фискална транспарентност
- 24. јун 2020, 14:00-15:30 – Тема: Интегритет (одговорност) власти

#### *Results of the public call for participation in the “kick-off” consultations*

Сходно областима у којима делују и за које су заинтересоване организације цивилног друштва могу послати своје пријаве за учешће на одговарајућем састанку најкасније до 18. јуна 2020. године на е-mail адресу [info@civilnodrustvo.gov.rs](mailto:info@civilnodrustvo.gov.rs) са назнаком „Пријава за учешће на ОГП састанку – назив теме“.

As for **consultation meetings**, to make the discussion as efficient as possible and to allow enough time for all participants to present their proposals, meetings were organized by topics (areas) that corresponded to the basic OGP values. In addition, **to identify the needs and encourage the participation of CSOs dealing with sector-specific public policies in the field of health, environment, culture, media, education and youth**, specific consultation meetings on these topics were organized as an important new feature in this Action Plan drafting cycle. In this regard, **a total of eight consultative meetings were held with the participation of over 70 representatives** of central and local government bodies – members of the Special Working Group, representatives of the donor community in Serbia and representatives of civil society, with the following timeline:

- ✓ June 19, 2020, 11:30-13:00 – topic: Public participation in decision-making
- ✓ June 19, 2020, 14:00-15:30 – topic: Culture and Media
- ✓ June 22, 2020, 11:30-13:00 – topic: Access to information, open data and data reuse
- ✓ June 22, 2020, 14:00-15:30 – topic: Health and the environment
- ✓ June 23, 2020, 11:30-13:00 – topic: Public services
- ✓ June 23, 2020, 14:00-15:30 – topic: Education and youth policy
- ✓ June 24, 2020, 11:30-13:00 – topic: Fiscal transparency
- ✓ June 24, 2020, 14:00-15:30 – topic: Integrity (accountability) of the government.



*Consultation meeting – public participation  
(19 June 2020)*

In the opening session of all meetings, the participants were introduced to the OGP initiative, its values, manner and timeline of drafting action plans, as well as their structure, the Independent Reporting Mechanism and all other facts relevant to the drafting of the Action Plan. In addition, results of the implementation of the Action Plan for the period 2018-2020 were briefly presented, for the fields related to the specific topic of the meeting, with the aim of informing participants about what had already been achieved through participation in OGP in that specific field, as well as to ensure the necessary continuity. After the opening session, participants presented, considered and defined the proposals for commitments that could be included in the Action Plan. In addition to participating in the consultation meetings, which enabled participants to take part



### OGP MINIMUM STANDARD

#### 3.3.

“A mechanism to gather inputs from a range of stakeholders during an appropriate period of time for the chosen mechanism has been developed.”



### OGP MINIMUM STANDARD

#### 3.2.

“Outreach activities with stakeholders to raise awareness of OGP and opportunities to get involved in the development of the action plan are carried out.”



without investing additional resources as they had been organized *online*, **stakeholders also had the option to submit written proposals using the prescribed form** published in the public invitation. As a result of the consultation process, **a total of 23 commitments were proposed**, both through consultation meetings and in writing, which were sorted by the following fields (topics): public participation, access to information, open data and data re-use, government integrity, fiscal transparency and public services. Upon completion of the consultation process, a **Report on the consultations** was prepared and published, including all the proposals and conclusions from the consultation meetings.<sup>28</sup>

Drafting of the Action Plan continued through the Working Group meetings, both in plenary sessions and in smaller groups of participants focusing on specific commitment proposals, as well as through continuous electronic communication with parties that had submitted the commitment proposals and government bodies that should be responsible for their implementation. In these ways, the proposed commitments were considered, the possibilities for their inclusion in the Action Plan were discussed and explanations were given to the parties who submitted the proposals on the reasons why certain commitments were impossible to include. The Working Group meetings in smaller groups has once again proved to be a very efficient solution for closer consideration of individual proposals.

**The Draft Action Plan** was published on 1 December 2020, with an invitation to participate in two-week public consultations.<sup>29</sup> After the consultation, a Report was drafted. Subsequently, in line with the Rules of Procedure of the Government, the opinions of the competent public administration bodies of the Proposed Conclusion (with the Action Plan as its constituent part), were collected, after which it was submitted to the Government for review and decision-making. **The Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Action Plan on 24 December 2020.**

In addition to the above activities, directly related to the drafting of the Action Plan, steps were also taken during the preparation period towards **the promotion of results achieved thus far, exchange of experience with other participating countries and presentation of the process of drafting the new Action Plan**. Still, the circumstances in which the Action Plan was being drafted, primarily those caused by the pandemic, were not conducive to intensive promotional activities “on the ground”. Nevertheless, OGP was promoted in the consultation meetings mentioned above, as were opportunities for stakeholders to take part in the Action Plan

<sup>28</sup> Report from consultation meetings, available at: <http://mduls.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/Izve%C5%A1taj-sa-konsultativnih-sastanaka-sa-OCD-AP-OGP-2020-2022-FINAL.docx?script=lat> (MPALSG website) and: <https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1> (OGP section on the eConsultations Portal – Implemented Action Plans).

<sup>29</sup> Public invitation to participate in consultations on the Draft Action Plan, available at: <https://mduls.gov.rs/javne-rasprave-i-konsultacije/ministarstvo-drzavne-uprave-i-lokalne-samouprave-upucuje-poziv-za-ucescu-u-javnim-konsultacijama-u-okviru-procesa-izrade-akcionog-plana-za-sprovođenje-inicijative-partnerstvo-za-otvorenu-upravu-u-r/>



development process. In addition, at the **Open Government Conference in Bosnia and Herzegovina** held in Sarajevo in February 2020, the MPALSG representative presented, to the participants from the region, experiences and results of the Republic of Serbia regarding reforms successfully implemented within the Partnership. In the organization of a project to support visibility and communication of public administration reform, a **media briefing** on public participation in public policy design was held on 5 March 2020. At this event, the MPALSG representative presented the results of the Serbia's participation in OGP achieved thus far, experience in cooperating with the civil society and outlined the plans regarding the adoption of a new Action Plan. The MPALSG representatives participated at the **regional online meeting of national OGP contact points in the Western Balkans**, held on 15-16 October 2020, organised by the Regional School for Public Administration (*RESPA*). Experience of the current action plan development processes in the region and ways these processes could be additionally improved were exchanged at this meeting.

Finally, when it comes **to providing a reasoned response to proposals and ensuring ongoing dialog during the creation of the Action Plan** (*Standard 4*), the public was able to monitor the entire drafting process through publicly available minutes from all meetings of the Working Group and reports with detailed information on the discussion, review and conclusions regarding the proposals for commitments, which were published regularly. These documents contain all commitment proposals collected during the consultation process, information on their further definition and status (proposal accepted/not accepted), as well as rationales for those proposals that could not be included in the Action Plan, **providing feedback to the participants, but also allowing the public to monitor the entire course of commitment development.**<sup>30</sup>

### STANDARD 3.

- ✓ **Providing timely information to the public** on all activities, including **opportunities for participation** in the elaboration of the Action Plan;
- ✓ **8 online consultative meetings** to collect proposals + **written contributions**;
- ✓ **Introduction of “sector-specific topics”** (health, environment protection, culture, media, education and youth);
- ✓ **Implementation of promotional activities.**

### OGP MINIMUM STANDARD 4.1.

“It is documented and reported back, or written feedback published, to stakeholders on how their contributions were considered during the development of the action plan.”



<sup>30</sup> Working Group meetings minutes, available at: <https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1> (section: Implemented Action Plans).



#### STANDARD 4.

- ✓ **Ongoing dialog was ensured in the preparation of the Action Plan – 20 meetings were held to define commitments** (8 consultative meetings + 12 Working Group meetings);
- ✓ **Written feedback on all proposed commitments is contained in the minutes of the Working Group meetings and is publicly available;**

## 2.2. Participation and joint work during the implementation of the Action Plan

As with the drafting of the Action Plan, the COVID-19 pandemic and early parliamentary elections (held again in April 2022) set a context for its implementation, which certainly affected the effectiveness of participation, co-creation, monitoring and reporting. However, despite such

circumstances, **inclusive and timely opportunities for dialog and collaboration were provided during Action Plan implementation and monitoring (Standard 5).**

In this regard, the monitoring and reporting process took place through cooperation of all stakeholders involved **in three basic ways:**

- ✓ through **the Working Group meetings**, where the competent authorities reported to other members of the Forum on the progress in implementing commitments,
- ✓ through **the drafting of appropriate reports (reviews) on the implementation of the Action Plan**, and
- ✓ through **the events organized for the general public**, where both the results of the implementation of commitments under the Action Plan and the overall achievements resulting from Serbia's participation in the OGP were presented, and this initiative was promoted.

**During the Action Plan implementation period, the Working Group held four meetings** to discuss the level of fulfilment and progress made in implementing commitments, as well as the challenges and the following steps. In 2021, meetings were held on 29 July, 3 November and 29 December, while the meeting that took place on 17 May 2022 was also the last that the Working Group held with its current members. The monitoring and reporting process within the Working Group encompassed reports from the public administration bodies responsible for the implementation of the commitments at the meetings on the progress achieved and other related issues, after which the Forum discussed the results presented. Monitoring of the implementation of commitments by the general public and dissemination of information by the Working Group on the level of progress made was ensured by regular publishing of the Working Group meeting minutes with all relevant information<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, during the implementation period of the Action Plan, **three self-assessment reports on its implementation** were elaborated and published (excluding this one): **Six-month self-assessment report**, in June 2021, which was discussed at the sixth Working Group meeting; **Annual self-assessment**

<sup>31</sup> Working Group meetings minutes, available at: <https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1> (section: Implemented Action Plans).

**report**, which was elaborated and published on 17 January 2022, with a public invitation for two-week public consultations;<sup>32</sup> **the 18-month self-assessment report**, elaborated in May 2022 and discussed at an open Working Group meeting with interested civil society organizations within the OGP Week.<sup>33</sup> All reports were based on the contributions of the competent authorities on the implementation of commitments they were charged with in the Action Plan.

Finally, **two events for the general public**, i.e., all interested CSOs and other stakeholders, were held in 2022 to discuss the results of the Action Plan implementation at that time. The first event was the already mentioned **Open Working Group meeting with representatives of CSOs**, held within the OGP Week on 17 May 2022, where the implementation of commitments during the eighteen-month Action Plan implementation period was considered.<sup>34</sup> In addition, within the *online OGP Info-Day*, held on 20 December 2022, as a part of the commencement of the drafting of the fifth Action Plan, all stakeholders had the opportunity to get informed and discuss the extent of implementation of all commitments and



#### OGP MINIMUM STANDARD 5.1.

“The Working Group holds at least two meetings every year with civil society to present results on the implementation of the action plan and collect comments.”



results of this Action Plan through the presentation of preliminary results of this report.<sup>35</sup> Both events were open to participation of all CSOs, government bodies, local self-government units and other stakeholders – public administration and local self-government authorities were invited (invitation letters were sent), while public calls were prepared and published for the purpose of inviting CSOs and other stakeholders to both events.<sup>36</sup>



*Open Working Group meeting with CSOs*  
(17 May 2022)

<sup>32</sup> Public invitation to participate in public consultations on the Draft annual report – self-assessment on the implementation of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Open Government Partnership initiative in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2022, available at: <https://mduls.gov.rs/javne-rasprave-i-konsultacije/konsultacije-o-nacrtu-godisnjeg-izvestaja-samoprocene-o-implementaciji-akcionog-plana-za-provodjenje-inicijative-partnerstvo-za-otvorenu-upravu-u-republici-srbiji-za-period-2020-2022-godine/>.

<sup>33</sup> These reports are available at: <https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1> (section: Implemented Action Plans).

<sup>34</sup> For more information, please visit: <https://mduls.gov.rs/saopstenja/pocelo-obelezavanje-nedelje-partnerstva-za-otvorenu-upravu-u-srbiji/>.

<sup>35</sup> For more information, please visit: <https://mduls.gov.rs/saopstenja/mduls-ostaje-posveceno-vrednostima-i-principima-otvorene-uprave/>.

<sup>36</sup> Public invitation to participate in the Open Working Group meeting with CSO representatives, available at: <https://mduls.gov.rs/obavestjenja/javni-poziv-za-ucescenadogadjajima-u-okviru-obelezavanja-nedelje-partnerstva-za-otvorenu-upravu-2022-godine/>; Public invitation to participate in the OGP Info-Day, available at: <https://mduls.gov.rs/obavestjenja/javni-poziv-za-ucescenainfo-danu-o-partnerstvu-za-otvorenu-upravu/>.



### STANDARD 5.

- ✓ **Ongoing dialog was provided during the implementation of the Action Plan – 4 Working Group meetings were held + several events with the participation of the general public;**
- ✓ Dissemination of information and monitoring progress made possible through **regular publication of the Working Group meeting minutes;**
- ✓ **Four reports – self-assessments made:** six months report, annual report, eighteen months report and final report;
- ✓ Intensive activities on Action Plan promotion and encouraging participation in monitoring its implementation – **video, events within the OGP Week 2021 and 2022.**



ИНФОРМАЦИОНА  
ПАРТНЕРСТВО ЗА ОТВОРЕНУ УПРАВУ

20. децембар 2022. ГОДИНЕ

**OGP Info-Day**  
(20 December 2022)

In addition to the above ways through which Action Plan implementation was monitored and the progress reviewed, other various activities were carried out during its implementation period to promote this document, encourage greater public participation in its monitoring, as well as to promote the OGP initiative and the results Serbia has achieved so far.

Within **the OGP week 2021, held from 17-22 May 2021**<sup>37</sup>, with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia and the European Union project "Visibility and Communication of Public Administration Reform", several *online* events were held : Within the **Panel discussion “Inclusive Administration”** held on 17 May 2021, focus was on identifying needs and prospects of minority groups (Roma, youth and people with disabilities) in the context of OGP values; the **Workshop Administration closest to its citizens**, held on 18 May 2021, was intended for the exchange of experiences of local self-governments in achieving open government values and drafting local action plans; **the Final event**, held on 21 May 2021 was dedicated to the results of the Republic of Serbia's participation in OGP and promotion of the current Action Plan.



**OGP Week 2021**

<sup>37</sup> Public invitation to participate in events within the OGP Week 2021, available at: <https://mduls.gov.rs/obavestjenja/javni-poziv-za-ucesce-na-dogadjajima-u-okviru-obelezavanja-nedelje-partnerstva-za-otvorenu-upravu/>; For more detail on the events, please visit: <https://mduls.gov.rs/saopstenja/partnerstvom-za-otvorenu-upravu-do-razumevanja-dijaloga-i-poverenja-izmedju-gradjana-i-uprave/>.



To promote the Action Plan and the OGP initiative itself, with support of the European Union project “Visibility and Communication of Public Administration Reform”, **a video review of the commitments from the Action Plan was produced**. In addition to being published on the websites of MPALSG and OGP<sup>38</sup>, this video was also shown in several events involving the presence of a wider audience, as well as at the regional meeting of the Western Balkans OGP contact points.



*OGP Week 2022*

**Within the OGP Week 2022, held from 16-20 May 2022**, with the support of the European Union project "Visibility and Communication of Public Administration Reform", multiple events were held as well: the above mentioned **Open Working Group meeting with interested CSOs** was held on 17 May 2022 to discuss the implementation of the Action Plan for the period 2020-2022; the conference **Partnership – A Key for Better Solutions**, held on 19 May 2022 was dedicated to the examples of successful cooperation between local self-government units and CSOs in achieving open government values at the local level, as well as to the importance and examples of best practice in ‘opening data’ and their re-use; **two trainings for the use of the eConsultations Portal** for citizens, CSOs and other interested public were also held within the OGP Week, with the aim of strengthening the capacities of the interested public to participate in the process of drafting legislation and public policy documents through this portal.

*Promo-video on the OGP AP 2020-2022*  
<https://vimeo.com/632925812/f98b864f90>

**won second place among 18 European countries in the competition for the most influential commitment** from national action plans created through participation in this initiative. The votes of the OGP community awarded the commitment of **Simplification of administrative procedures and regulations – ePAPER**, contained in the Action Plan for the period 2018-2020, which was implemented by the National Secretariat for Public Policy. This commitment continues within the Action Plan, which is the subject of this report, which will be discussed in detail in the section on commitment implementation.<sup>39</sup>

Finally, it is important to note that during the fourth cycle, the OGP community acknowledged the efforts and activities undertaken thus far in the Republic of Serbia as part of its participation in this initiative. At the global OGP Summit in December 2021, **Serbia**



*Novi Pazar – the first LSG in OGP*

<sup>38</sup> Video on the MPALSG website: <https://mduls.gov.rs/uprava-po-meri-svih-nas/video-i-infografici/>; Video on the OGP website: <https://vimeo.com/632925812/f98b864f90>.

<sup>39</sup> For more information, please visit: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/open-government-awards/>.



On the other hand, after a public competition and a selection procedure by the OGP, **the city of Novi Pazar became the first local self-government from the Republic of Serbia to participate directly in this initiative in May 2022.** Novi Pazar won the right to participate through a competition process in which, out of 60 local communities from around the globe that applied, 30 of the best were selected, based on their previous efforts on developing and implementing OGP values in their communities.<sup>40</sup>



### 3. NRM RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Reporting Mechanism (hereinafter: NRM), whose role in the Republic of Serbia is being played by the Centre for European Policy, presented a set of recommendations in the Design Report for Serbia 2018-2020,<sup>41</sup> which were considered and implemented during the fourth OGP cycle to a significant degree. Below is a table showing the five key recommendations, as well as descriptions of activities to be undertaken in line with them.

A REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS	Considered	Included in the Action Plan
1. Ensure stronger support for the national OGP process at a higher political level.	✓	✓
2. Increase the diversity of leading institutions in implementing commitments and convince key bodies that decide on commitment proposals to take active part in deliberations of the Working Group and to strive for a consensus.	✓	✓
3. Increase the number of commitments primarily targeted at public accountability, direct involvement of citizens and public services of importance to citizens.	✓	✓
4. Include commitments that, in addition to legislative changes, also apply to their implementation and enforcement.	✓	✓
5. Focus on reuse of open data.	✓	X

When it comes to the **key recommendation NRM 1**, as the public administration body that coordinates the participation of the Republic of Serbia in OGP, the MPALSG has taken into account the above recommendation and undertaken steps toward its implementation. In that regard, as was mentioned above,

<sup>40</sup> For more information, please visit: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/news/open-government-partnership-welcomes-30-new-local-governments/>.

<sup>41</sup> Design Report for Serbia 2018-2020, available at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/serbia-design-report-2018-2020/>.



at the proposal of the MPALSG, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted a new **Decision on the establishment of a Public Administration Reform Council** in June 2021, with tasks including “**monitoring and considering issues related to the participation of the Republic of Serbia in the Open Government Partnership, initiating and proposing to the Government of measures and activities related to the improvement of implementation of this initiative, as well as its promotion.**”<sup>42</sup> In practice, this means that this advisory body of the Government, established at the highest, ministerial level, will consider both issues related to OGP, including the processes of drafting and implementing action plans, but also potential challenges in the work of the Working Group. Since the Action Plan, which is the subject of this report, had been adopted in December 2020, before the Decision was adopted and the new Council formed in June 2021, issues related to its drafting process could not have been raised before the Council. On the other hand, during the implementation period of the Action Plan, no challenges were observed that could have been a topic for discussion in the Council, whose work was significantly slowed down by the new electoral cycle in 2022. In any case, the inclusion of OGP issues in the Council's mandate is a very important step toward full implementation of the recommendation, and its full implementation in practice is expected within the next, fifth cycle, when the Council is scheduled to hold at least one thematic session dedicated to the drafting of a new Action Plan. Finally, the MPALSG continued its practice of informing members of the Government, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Government, on the results of action plans implementation and thus, in order to inform them, submitted to them the Final self-assessment report on the implementation of the Action Plan for the period 2018-2020. The plan is to continue with the same practice when it comes to this report.

Finally, it should be noted that a representative of the Prime Minister's Office is involved in the work of the Working Group, as well as that one of the commitments from the Action Plan – commitment no. 7 – was formulated in close cooperation with the Prime Minister's Office, which indicates understanding of, and commitment to the OGP values from the very core of the Government.

In relation to **the key recommendation NRM 2** and given the commitments included in the Action Plan and the bodies responsible for their implementation, **it is evident that progress regarding the diversity of competent institutions has been made compared to the previous OGP cycle.** Unlike the previous Action Plan, when more than half of the commitments were entrusted to MPALSG and OCCS, a better balance has been established in this cycle, so the number of commitments is more evenly distributed between seven government bodies - the Ministry of Culture and Information, the Ministry of Environment Protection, MPALSG and OITEG (*Office for Information Technologies and E-government, trans. note*) are each in charge of two commitments, the National Academy of Public Administration, the National Secretariat for Public Policy and the General Secretariat of the Government each have one commitment as their responsibility, while there is one commitment in the shared competence of several of the above bodies. It is particularly important to emphasize that the General Secretariat of the Government (which is charged with two commitments) and the National Secretariat for Legislation (despite the fact that no commitment proposal was in the competence of this body) actively participated in the process of considering commitment proposals and drafting the Action Plan itself, which is particularly important in view of their position as key bodies at the very core of the Government. In addition, **a significant number of Working Group meetings in smaller groups on specific commitment proposals speaks towards**

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<sup>42</sup> Decision on Establishment of the Public Administration Reform Council (“Official Gazette of the RS” no. 56/21), available at: <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/odluka/2021/56/4>.



**the desire to reach a consensus.** Of course, there is room for further improvement of the participation of certain key government bodies (such as the Ministry of Finance) in the next cycle.

In accordance with the **key recommendation NRM 3**, and given the previous recommendation in the section concerning the increase in the number of commitments that pertain to direct involvement of citizens, the Action Plan includes, as commitment no. 3, the **development of the eConsultations Portal**, which significantly improves the functionality of the existing eGovernment Portal in this domain and enables direct participation of citizens in the preparation of legislative and public policy documents using digital technologies. **This commitment has been fully implemented.** In addition, **the commitment no. 4 was fully implemented, concerning a very important issue of citizen participation in the management of protected areas**, which introduced new civic participation mechanisms in this environmental protection field. Finally, commitment 12 calls for improved citizen participation in defining priorities when setting up competitions for the allocation of funds intended for co-financing media content production, but there were significant delays in implementing this commitment, so its transfer to the next Action Plan should be considered.

As for a number of commitments related to public services directly involving citizens, the Action Plan includes commitment no. 5, which would allow **citizens to apply for changes and receive Decisions on changes in the voter register electronically**, but there was a significant delay in its implementation due to different objective reasons. Through commitment no. 6, **administrative procedures for businesses and citizens were simplified**, while commitment no. 7 encompassed the creation of a national platform through which the **citizens would be able to report cases of peer violence directly**.

Finally, in the field of public accountability, despite the fact that the Action Plan contains no commitments directly related to this issue, it should be noted that elements of public accountability can be found in several commitments which belong partly to other fields (e.g., commitment no. 5 or commitment no. 7). However, it should be taken into account that the revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 was adopted during the drafting of the Action Plan and that, as it was being drafted, a new Public Administration Reform Strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2021-2030 was being developed, where one of the objectives included improving management accountability in public administration bodies. As a result, some of the commitments that could be found in this Action Plan were included as activities in the above documents.

Building on **the key recommendation NRM 4**, commitment number 2 has been included in the Action Plan; it prescribes the establishment of systematic monitoring and quality control of citizens' participation in consultations and public hearings, wherein limited progress had been made. Together with the establishment and use of the eConsultations Portal from commitment no. 3, mechanisms envisaged in this commitment shall directly apply to the **implementation of legislation regulating consultations and public hearings**. In addition, commitment number 11 envisages **monitoring the implementation of the regulations governing financial support to media projects**, both by bodies competent for monitoring of these regulations and by the interested public, but there have been significant delays in its implementation.

**Key recommendation NRM 5** regarding greater focus on re-using open data could not be fully implemented for several reasons. Firstly, only one of the commitment proposals collected during the consultation process had elements of open data reuse (development of a Noise Portal), but it was not included





in the Action Plan because the competent body (Environmental Protection Agency) assessed that it was not realistically feasible during the Action Plan implementation period. In addition, in June 2020, a Program for eGovernment Development in the Republic of Serbia was adopted for the period 2020 to 2022, with the Action Plan for its implementation, which plans very significant and specific measures to further improve the very initiative for data opening, as well as their re-use. Thus, the Specific Objective 4 of this program, Opening data in public administration, contains the following measure: Support for the use of open data, which means organizing activities such as open data challenges that will develop solutions based on data opened by public authorities. Despite this, it is important to note that there are several commitments in the Action Plan that involve disclosure of data in an open format (e.g., commitments 7, 8, 10 and 11).

#### 4. REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN COMMITMENTS

This review is based on individual contributions of the bodies responsible for the implementation of commitments and encompasses the implementation period from December 2020 to 31 August 2022. The level of commitment implementation is measured in relation to activities (that each commitment consists of), and deadlines set for their implementation, and is classified in one of the three categories identified by OGP – complete implementation/significant progress, limited progress, not initiated/initiated with significant delay.

As shown in the chart (*Figure 1*), none of the commitments under the Action Plan are classified into the (sub)category “not initiated”, indicating that implementation of all commitments has begun, unlike in the previous cycle. This is particularly significant given the complexity of the circumstances in which the implementation of this document was carried out, which were pointed out earlier in the report. Certainly, the broader context marked by COVID-19 and parliamentary elections had an impact on the implementation of certain commitments not being completed. Firstly, this pertains to commitments that involved the adoption of certain laws (such as commitments 9, 11 and 12), which could not be fully implemented due to the technical mandate of the Government during the largest part of 2022. In addition, the dedication of IT capacities to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic slowed down the implementation of commitments that required the engagement of these resources (such as commitments 5, 7 and 10). On the other hand, *Figure 2* confirms the previously mentioned greater diversity of commitment holders. Finally, some members of the Working Group from CSOs pointed out during the implementation period that implementation of certain commitments that included adoption of legislation (commitments 4 and 8) was not sufficiently transparent or inclusive, despite the commitments in question being fully implemented at the end, i.e., in accordance with the Action Plan.



Figure 1. Commitment implementation statistics

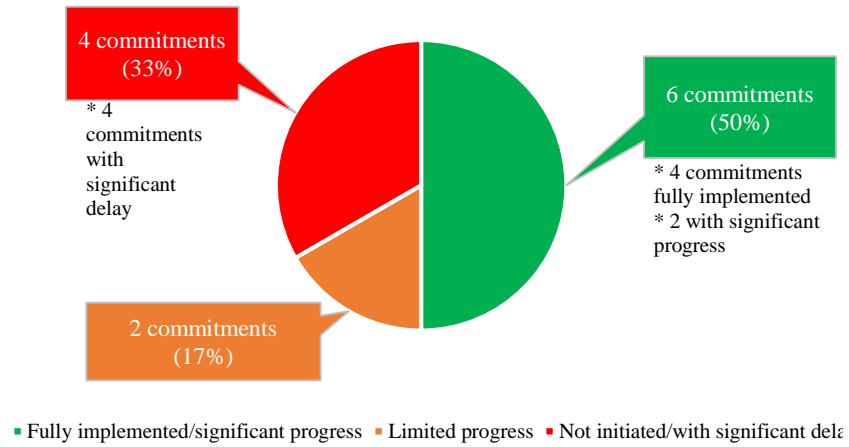
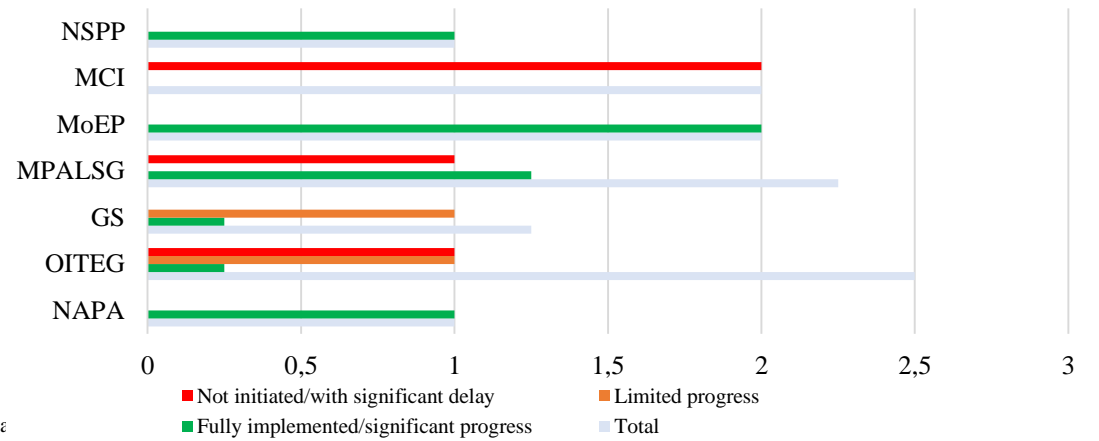


Figure 2 Actions undertaken by competent institutions





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

COMMITMENT NAME	Implementation level		
	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
<b>COMMITMENT 1</b> Integrating the participation of CSOs in decision-making and anti-discrimination processes as horizontal issues in the professional development programs of civil servants and monitoring their implementation	√		
<b>COMMITMENT 2</b> Establishment of systemic monitoring and quality control of public participation in the preparation of legislation and public policy documents		√	
<b>COMMITMENT 3</b> Improving opportunities and strengthening the capacity of citizens for electronic participation in consultations and public debates – eConsultations Portal	√		
<b>COMMITMENT 4</b> Improving mechanisms for public involvement in the management processes of protected areas on the territory of the Republic of Serbia	√		
<b>COMMITMENT 5</b> Development of e-service for citizens – submitting requests and receiving decisions on changes in the voter register			√
<b>COMMITMENT 6</b> Improving the quality of public service delivery through the establishment of a single public register of administrative procedures and a single platform with all information on procedures/services – ePAPER	√		



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

COMMITMENT NAME	Implementation level		
	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
<b>COMMITMENT 7</b> Establishing and developing a system for electronic reporting, response and monitoring of violence involving children, prevention and support of victims – “I keep you safe” platform		√	
<b>COMMITMENT 8</b> Amendment of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance	√		
<b>COMMITMENT 9</b> Creating legal bases for the establishment of a central web portal displaying all procedures for environmental impact assessment, as well as procedures for strategic environmental impact assessment at the national, provincial and local levels	√		
<b>COMMITMENT 10</b> Improving the management of access to data exchanged in the public administration system			√
<b>COMMITMENT 11</b> Development of a single information platform for monitoring project co-financing in the field of public information			√
<b>COMMITMENT 12</b> Introduction of the obligation to conduct a public debate when determining topics important for the realization of public interest in the territory for which a public competition is announced in the field of public information			√



<b>COMMITMENT IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW</b>			
<b>COMMITMENT 1</b>			
<b>Integrating the participation of CSOs in decision-making and anti-discrimination processes as horizontal issues in the professional development programs of civil servants and monitoring their implementation</b>			
Competent institution name	National Academy for Public Administration (NAPA)		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
	✓		
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021 and 2022 annual training programs, <a href="https://www.napa.gov.rs/tekst/49/godisnji-programi-obuka-naju.php">https://www.napa.gov.rs/tekst/49/godisnji-programi-obuka-naju.php</a></li> <li>• Evaluation of annual training programs for 2021 <a href="https://www.napa.gov.rs/tekst/487/izvestaji-i-evaluacije.php">https://www.napa.gov.rs/tekst/487/izvestaji-i-evaluacije.php</a></li> </ul>		
Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)	<p>The essence of the commitment is to introduce CSO participation and anti-discrimination as horizontal issues in professional development of civil servants in order to raise awareness and improve knowledge and skills for better cooperation with CSOs and implementation of anti-discrimination policies in their work. This is planned to be achieved through the preparation and adoption of general training programs and manager training programs for 2021 and 2022, supplemented by identified horizontal issues within identified individual training programs (<i>activities 1 and 2</i>), strengthening the capacities of training providers to deliver training programs improved by developing horizontal issues (<i>activity 3</i>) and monitoring the implementation of training programs, which integrate horizontal issues (<i>activity 4</i>).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p>Commitment implementation began by mapping the training programs suitable for incorporation of two horizontal issues – CSO participation and anti-discrimination – in 2020. Based on the results, within the deadlines set out in the Action Plan, the General Training Program for Civil Servants and Manager Training Program for 2021 and 2022 were developed and adopted (adopted annual training programs available at:</p>		



	<p><a href="https://www.napa.gov.rs/tekst/49/godisnji-programi-obuka-naju.php">https://www.napa.gov.rs/tekst/49/godisnji-programi-obuka-naju.php</a>), comprising individual training programs complemented by the identified horizontal issues, whereby <b>the first two activities under this commitment have been fully implemented (activities 1 and 2).</b></p> <p>With regard to activities that include strengthening the capacities of training providers (<i>activity 3</i>), <i>Instructions for implementation of horizontal issues in identified training programs</i> was supplied to the training providers at a monthly level once training implementation was agreed upon, during the period envisaged for this activity but also continuing afterwards. This Instruction describes the purpose of introducing horizontal issues into training programs and provides clear guidelines to training providers as to how these issues need to be addressed in the training itself. In addition, the National Academy of Public Administration has continuously supported the training providers through various forms of consultation, as well as by establishing the “Training Providers Club”, where horizontal issues and methodologies for their implementation were presented in detail. In this way, <b>activity 3 of the commitment was fully implemented.</b></p> <p>The process of monitoring the delivery of training programs that integrate horizontal issues (<i>activity 4</i>) was continuously implemented throughout the entire period of commitment implementation, through training evaluation by participants. According to NAPA’s findings, during the implementation of this commitment, 172 training sessions integrating horizontal issues were delivered to a total of 5,804 participants, evaluated by an average score of 3.70 out of a maximum of 4 (training evaluation for the period January-December 2021 available at: <a href="https://www.napa.gov.rs/extfile/sr/3896/NAPA%20Evaluacija%202021%20.pdf">https://www.napa.gov.rs/extfile/sr/3896/NAPA%20Evaluacija%202021%20.pdf</a>). In view of the above, monitoring the implementation of training programs, which integrate horizontal issues, as covered by <b>activity 4</b>, was fully implemented.</p> <p>Bearing all this in mind, <b>the commitment has been fully implemented.</b></p>
<p>Further steps</p>	<p>In the course of developing the 2023 Training Program, NAPA has undertaken steps to expand the list of trainings incorporating horizontal issues, so they are now included in the training programs for LSG employees as well. In this regard, the process of adopting annual training programs for 2023 is currently under way. After the 2023 Training Program proposal was set out by the NAPA Program Council, and positive opinions received from the High Council of Civil Servants and the Council for Continual Professional Development of LSG Employees, in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Serbian Government, the training programs were sent to the competent authorities for their opinion, after which they will be sent to the Government for consideration and decision-making.</p>



<b>COMMITMENT 2</b>			
<b>Establishment of systemic monitoring and quality control of public participation in the preparation of legislation and public policy documents</b>			
Competent institution name	General Secretariat of the Government		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
		✓	
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government Activity Report for 2021, <a href="https://www.gs.gov.rs/doc/IZVESTAJ_O_RADU_VLADE_2021.pdf">https://www.gs.gov.rs/doc/IZVESTAJ_O_RADU_VLADE_2021.pdf</a></li> </ul>		
Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)	<p>This commitment calls for the establishment and development of mechanisms for systematic monitoring and quality control of public participation in the preparation of legislation and public policy documents through regular annual monitoring and disclosure of information and data of government bodies, starting with data and information for 2021. The commitment is planned to be implemented through the presentation of information and data on the consultations and public hearings conducted in the annual Government Activity Report, which will be generated from the database of the eConsultations Portal, as well as from other databases in accordance with the rules on the planning system and the work of the Government; the commitment consists of 4 activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amendments and additions to the instructions for drafting the 2021 Government Activity Report in which information and data on consultations and public hearings are introduced as an integral part of the Report (<i>activity 1</i>);</li> <li>2. collection and processing of data for 2021 (<i>activity 2</i>);</li> <li>3. adoption of the 2021 Government Activity Report, which contains information and data on the consultations and public hearings carried out (<i>activity 3</i>);</li> <li>4. publication of the 2021 Government Activity Report, which contains information and data on the consultations and public hearings carried out (<i>activity 4</i>).</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p><b>In the implementation of the first activity within this commitment, limited progress has been made (<i>activity 1</i>) by making amendments and additions to the Instructions for Drafting the Government Activity</b></p>		



	<p>Report for 2021, which is elaborated and delivered by the General Secretariat of the Government to the government bodies. In this way, government bodies are obliged to mark, in their annual activity reports submitted to the General Secretariat of the Government, those acts proposed by the Government to the National Assembly during 2021, which had been through the consultation and public debate process, regardless of whether they are planned for adoption in the Government’s plan for the year in question. However, the revised instructions prescribe only that information be submitted on acts, i.e., legislation, proposed by the Government to the National Assembly, but not on other regulations and public policy documents as provided for in the commitment itself.</p> <p>In the implementation of activities related to the collection and processing of data on consultations and public hearings conducted (<i>activity 2</i>), the planned method of implementation, which this was to generate data from the eConsultations Portal, was deviated from. The deviation was due to the fact that the Portal had only launched in December 2021, which made it impossible to implement the commitment in the way originally planned. In the above circumstances, the General Secretariat, according to available resources, collected data in the scope described in the previous activity and <b>thus, for activity 2, it can be said that limited implementation progress has been made.</b></p> <p>Although the Government adopted and published its activity report for 2021 (Government Activity Report for 2021 available at: <a href="https://www.gs.gov.rs/doc/IZVESTAJ_O_RADU_VLADE_2021.pdf">https://www.gs.gov.rs/doc/IZVESTAJ_O_RADU_VLADE_2021.pdf</a>) (<i>activities 3 and 4</i>) containing certain information on the consultations and public debates conducted, the extent of data presented only includes data on acts proposed by the Government to the National Assembly during the year in question, but not on other regulation or public policy documents as had been prescribed in the commitment. Given the above, <b>limited progress has been observed in these activities.</b></p> <p>Bearing all this in mind, <b>limited progress has been made within this commitment.</b></p>
<p>Further steps</p>	<p>The full use of the eConsultations Portal is expected to allow the commitment to be implemented in the upcoming period as originally foreseen.</p>





<b>COMMITMENT 3</b>			
<b>Improving opportunities and strengthening the capacity of citizens for electronic participation in consultations and public debates – eConsultations Portal</b>			
Competent institution name	For activities 1 and 2 Office for information Technologies and E-Government For Activity 3 General Secretariat of the Government For Activity 4 Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
	✓		
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The eConsultations Portal, <a href="https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/">https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/</a></li> <li>• Decision establishing the eConsultations Portal (“Official Gazette of the RS”, No. 62/2021), <a href="http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/odluka/2021/62/2/reg">http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/odluka/2021/62/2/reg</a></li> <li>• Training for eConsultations Portal, <a href="http://skipcentar.rs/sr_RS/vesti/nedelja-partnerstva-za-otvorenu-upravu-u-skip-centru-obuke-za-koriscenje-portala-ekonsultacije/">http://skipcentar.rs/sr_RS/vesti/nedelja-partnerstva-za-otvorenu-upravu-u-skip-centru-obuke-za-koriscenje-portala-ekonsultacije/</a></li> </ul>		
Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)	<p>The commitment is comprised of elaboration of the eConsultations Portal (<i>activity 1</i>), its piloting with civil society organisations and government bodies (<i>activity 2</i>), promotion of its regular use (<i>activity 3</i>) and implementation of trainings for its use, offered to citizens and civil society (<i>activity 4</i>).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p>The eConsultations Portal (available at: <a href="https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/">https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/</a>) was developed and launched in December 2021, meaning that <b>the first activity under the commitment has been fully implemented (<i>activity 1</i>)</b>. From its launch, 32 consultation processes and 17 public debate processes have been completed or are still underway, and 151 user profiles have been registered for citizens. Apart from the section that provides for public participation in the drafting of legislation and public policy documents, the Portal comprises a special section dedicated to the Serbian participation in OGP (available at: <a href="https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1">https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1</a>), which includes all relevant documents in this area; in addition, an electronic form has been developed for submission of commitment proposals, which should be used already in the drafting of the next action plan.</p>		



	<p>During the drafting process, in December 2020 and January 2021, a pilot version was launched for CSOs (27 representatives from 18 civil society organizations participated in functional testing and submitted comments on the test version), as well as key bodies participating in the development process, whose work is related to the involvement of the public in the decision-making process (National Secretariat for Public Policy, General Secretariat, National Secretariat for Legislation, Office for Information Technologies and E-Government, Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government and Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialog), which <b>fully implemented the second activity</b> as well (<i>activity 2</i>).</p> <p>To promote regular use of the eConsultations Portal within the public administration system (<i>activity 3</i>), the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted a Decision establishing the eConsultations Portal (“Official Gazette of the RS”, No. 62/2021, <a href="http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/odluka/2021/62/2/reg">http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/odluka/2021/62/2/reg</a>) which requires all government bodies to publish all information from their competence on this portal within the consultation and public debate process, in a timely and complete manner, in line with the law. In addition, at the end of November 2021, the General Secretariat of the Government, the National Secretariat for Public Policy and the Office for IT and e-Government sent a joint letter to all ministries and special organizations to inform them that the Portal would be launched and to remind them of the obligation to use it in accordance with the Decision.</p> <p>Regarding activities related to the training for the use of the eConsultations Portal for citizens and other interested public within the Serbian-Korean Information Access Centre (<i>activity 4</i>), two training sessions were conducted on 18 and 20 May 2022. The trainings were carried out in a hybrid format (at the SKIA Centre and <i>online</i>), with over 50 participants present, which <b>implemented this activity in full</b>.</p> <p>Bearing all this in mind, <b>the commitment has been fully implemented</b>.</p>
<p>Further steps</p>	<p>Further steps include work on improving existing and developing new features on the Portal, as well as more intensive promotion and popularization of its use among the interested public.</p>



<b>COMMITMENT 4</b>			
<b>Improve the mechanisms for public involvement in the management processes of protected areas on the territory of the Republic of Serbia</b>			
Competent institution name	Ministry of Environment Protection		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
	✓		
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopted Additions and Amendments on the Law on Nature Protection – Articles 54 and 68a (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 36/09, 88/10, 91/10 – corr., 14/16, 95/18 – other law and 71/21), <a href="http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2009/36/9/reg">http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2009/36/9/reg</a></li> </ul>		
Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)	<p>The commitment entails the adoption of a new law/additions and amendments to the Law on Nature Protection to introduce additional mechanisms for public participation in the management of protected areas, in particular: a mandatory public debate for all protected areas in the process of drafting management plans, which will further strengthen the existing public consultation mechanism, as well as an obligation to form a Council of Beneficiaries for all protected areas, to be composed of representatives of local civil society organizations, similar to the solution provided for national parks in the relevant sector legislation. The commitment consists of 3 activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of a working group for drafting legislation (<i>activity 1</i>);</li> <li>Preparation of the draft law (<i>activity 2</i>);</li> <li>Submitting the Draft Law on Nature Protection, containing provisions introducing new mechanisms for public participation in the management of protected areas provided for in this commitment, to the Government for adoption (<i>activity 3</i>).</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p>Regarding the establishment of a working group (<i>activity 1</i>), it was originally planned bearing in mind, at the time of the drafting of the Action Plan, that it was expected that a new Law on Nature Protection would be elaborated; however, in the meanwhile, the proposer opted instead for amendments to the current law, trying to get the new provisions envisaged in the commitment introduced into the normative text and implemented in</p>		



	<p>practice as soon as possible. The fact that the working group was not formed had no impact on the further implementation of this commitment.</p> <p>In this respect, the Ministry of Environment Protection first prepared the Draft Law on Additions and Amendments to the Law on Nature Protection, which contains provisions introducing new mechanisms for public participation in the management of protected areas (<b>activity 2</b>), then conducted a public hearing (draft law and call for public debate available at: <a href="https://javnerasprave.euprava.gov.rs/javna-rasprava/277">https://javnerasprave.euprava.gov.rs/javna-rasprava/277</a>) and finally sent the Draft to the Government for adopting it as a Bill, which <b>fully implemented the second activity</b>.</p> <p>Based on the submitted draft, the Government adopted the Bill on Amendments and Additions to the Law on Nature Protection, which contains provisions introducing new mechanisms for public participation in the management of protected areas provided for in this commitment (<b>activity 3</b>), which was subsequently adopted by the National Assembly in July 2021 (the Law is available at: <a href="http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2009/36/9/reg">http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2009/36/9/reg</a>), which <b>fully implemented the third activity within the commitment</b>.</p> <p>The adopted law introduced two new mechanisms for public participation in the management of protected areas foreseen by the commitment from the Action Plan, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• amendments and additions to article 54 <b>introduced public debate in the process of drafting management plans for protected areas</b>, which are among the most important management acts in these areas;</li> <li>• article 68a <b>introduced the responsibility of the managing body to establish a Council of beneficiaries of the protected area</b> to keep all users of a specific protected area informed in the easiest and most efficient manner possible, as well as to take into account their interests while making management decisions.</li> </ul> <p>Bearing all this in mind, <b>the commitment has been fully implemented.</b></p>
<p>Further steps</p>	<p>/</p>



<b>COMMITMENT 5</b>			
<b>Development of e-service for citizens – submitting requests and receiving decisions on changes in the voter register</b>			
Competent institution name	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
			✓
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law on Amendments and Additions to the Law on the Seal of Government and Other Bodies (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, no. 49/21), <a href="https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2007/101/6/reg">https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2007/101/6/reg</a></li> </ul>		
Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)	<p>The commitment calls for the establishment of a new e-service that will enable all registered users of the e-Government Portal to submit a request for change in the voter register to the competent authority through their user account and allow for decisions on changes in the voter register to be sent to them in the same manner. The commitment will be implemented through the adoption of the Law on Amendments and Additions to the Law on Seal of the Government and Other Authorities (<i>activity 3</i>), the creation of an electronic seal for the competent authorities (<i>activity 2</i>), the implementation of the electronic seal in the Single Voter Register system (<i>activity 3</i>) and linking the eGovernment Portal and the Single Voter Register system (<i>activity 4</i>).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p><b>The first activity under this commitment has been fully implemented</b> by the adoption of the Law on Amendments and Additions to the Law on Seal of the Government and Other Authorities (the Law available at: <a href="https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2007/101/6/reg">https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2007/101/6/reg</a>) in May 2021 (<i>activity 1</i>). By adopting this law, legal grounds were established for the implementation of further activities within this commitment, as it allows over 10,000 public administration bodies to obtain electronic seals and replace paper documents by their digital counterparts in communication with other bodies and citizens. To implement the electronic seal approval process efficiently, a special application has been developed.</p> <p>The remaining activities within this commitment include the creation of an electronic seal for the competent authorities (<i>activity 2</i>), the implementation of an electronic seal in the Single Voter Register system (<i>activity 3</i>)</p>		



	<p>and linking of the eGovernment Portal and the Single Voter Register system (<i>activity 4</i>), <b>but there was a significant delay in the implementation of the second activity, while the other two activities have not been started yet.</b> Such a status of these activities is due to the fact that during the period planned for commitment implementation, significant resources were allocated at first to the implementation of the referendum on the Amendments to the Constitution (held in January 2022), and then to the regular presidential and early parliamentary elections (held in April 2022), as well as to the implementation of commitments arising from inter-party dialog, and therefore it was not possible to make changes in the Single Voter Register system. In addition, few competent authorities (primarily local self-government units) managed to make an electronic seal within the time originally envisaged, which also slowed the implementation of other activities.</p> <p>In order to implement this commitment and establish a service on the eGovernment portal in the upcoming months, in mid-November 2022, cooperation with the Office for Information Technologies and E-Government was established and technical and functional specifications are currently being prepared.</p> <p>The above circumstances, together with the COVID-19 pandemic, have led <b>the implementation of this commitment to still be underway and with significant delay</b> compared to the planned deadlines.</p>		
Further steps	<p>Holding a meeting in December 2022 with the Ministry of Internal Affairs regarding the new service on the Portal. The service is expected to be developed in the eGovernment test environment in Q1 2023 and launched in production in Q2 2023.</p>		
<p><b>COMMITMENT 6</b></p> <p><b>Improving the quality of public service delivery through the establishment of a single public register of administrative procedures and a single platform with all information on procedures/services – ePAPER</b></p>			
Competent institution name	The National Secretariat for Public Policy		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
	✓		
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law on the Register of Administrative Procedures (“Official Gazette of the RS”, No. 44/2021), <a href="http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2021/44/6/reg">http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2021/44/6/reg</a></li> </ul>		



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Register of Administrative Procedures Portal, available at: <a href="https://rap.euprava.gov.rs/privreda/home">https://rap.euprava.gov.rs/privreda/home</a></li> <li>• Regulation on keeping, functioning and identification of data to be entered in the Register of Administrative Procedures, <a href="https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/uredba/2022/84/1/reg">https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/uredba/2022/84/1/reg</a></li> <li>• Digitized procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="https://euprava.gov.rs/%C5%BEivotna-oblast/32/%C5%BEivotna-situacija/53">https://euprava.gov.rs/%C5%BEivotna-oblast/32/%C5%BEivotna-situacija/53</a> – Tobacco Administration</li> <li>- <a href="https://euprava.gov.rs/%C5%BEivotna-oblast/35/%C5%BEivotna-situacija/183">https://euprava.gov.rs/%C5%BEivotna-oblast/35/%C5%BEivotna-situacija/183</a> – Plant Protection Directorate</li> <li>- <a href="https://euprava.gov.rs/%C5%BEivotna-oblast/35/%C5%BEivotna-situacija/210">https://euprava.gov.rs/%C5%BEivotna-oblast/35/%C5%BEivotna-situacija/210</a> – Veterinary Directorate</li> <li>- <a href="https://euprava.gov.rs/%C5%BEivotna-oblast/82/%C5%BEivotna-situacija/213">https://euprava.gov.rs/%C5%BEivotna-oblast/82/%C5%BEivotna-situacija/213</a> and <a href="https://euprava.gov.rs/%C5%BEivotna-oblast/82/%C5%BEivotna-situacija/214">https://euprava.gov.rs/%C5%BEivotna-oblast/82/%C5%BEivotna-situacija/214</a> – Ministry of Environment Protection</li> <li>- <a href="https://www.nsz.gov.rs/nsz/euprava/4148">https://www.nsz.gov.rs/nsz/euprava/4148</a> – National Employment Service</li> <li>- <a href="https://cropp.mre.gov.rs/e-cisgir/">https://cropp.mre.gov.rs/e-cisgir/</a> – Ministry of Mining and Energy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)	<p>The commitment provides for improving the quality of public service delivery by simplifying administrative procedures (eliminating redundant and simplifying the remaining administrative procedures), as well as establishing a single public register of administrative procedures and other requirements for doing business through a portal providing all the necessary information. As such, it consists of the following activities: adoption of the Law on Establishing the Registry (<i>activity 1</i>), adoption of bylaws for establishing the Registry (<i>activity 2</i>), list of administrative procedures for citizens (<i>activity 3</i>), and collection of initiatives from businesses and citizens for amendments, improvements or abolishment of procedures or inefficient regulations (<i>activity 4</i>).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p>By adopting the Law on the Register of Administrative Procedures (available at: <a href="http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2021/44/6/reg">http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2021/44/6/reg</a>) and its entry into force on 7 May 2021, <b>the first activity under this commitment was implemented in full (<i>activity 1</i>)</b>. In addition, the Registry of Administrative Procedures Portal has been online since June 2021 (available at: <a href="https://rap.euprava.gov.rs/privreda/home">https://rap.euprava.gov.rs/privreda/home</a>) and currently has 2,316 procedures for economic operators.</p> <p>When it comes to the drafting and adoption of bylaws to the Law on the Register of Administrative Procedures (<i>activity 2</i>), the Regulation on keeping, functioning and identification of data to be entered into the Register of</p>



	<p>Administrative Procedures (“Official Gazette of the RS”, No. 84/2022, available at: <a href="https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/uredba/2022/84/1/reg">https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/uredba/2022/84/1/reg</a>) came into force on 6 August 2022. With some delays from the deadlines provided for in the Action Plan, <b>this activity has been fully implemented</b>, but it should be noted that the Law on the Register of Administrative Procedures had already provided sufficient legal basis for the functioning of the Portal and that the dynamics of bylaw adoption have not had a significant impact on its operation.</p> <p>As to the list of administrative procedures for citizens (<i>activity 3</i>), 465 such procedures have been entered into the Registry so far, while the entire inventory should be completed by the end of 2022, in line with the Law. A special challenge in the implementation of this activity is the fact that work is simultaneously underway on an inventory of administrative requirements, as well as on the simplification of procedures for citizens. <b>Significant progress has been made in implementing this activity.</b></p> <p>The collection of initiatives from businesses and citizens for amendments, improvements or termination of procedures or inefficient regulations (<i>activity 4</i>) is ongoing.</p> <p><b>Overall, the efforts to simplify administrative procedures for businesses have so far resulted in the simplification of 278 procedures that were part of the ePAPER 2019-2021 Action Plan, as well as in the optimization of an additional 52 procedures optimized outside the AP in the same period (330 in total). The cost savings for the economy are around 30 million euros. The ePAPER program digitalized 64 processes for businesses. During 2022, 43 additional procedures were optimized.</b></p> <p>Bearing all this in mind, <b>significant progress has been made within this commitment.</b></p>
Further steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation and adoption of the new ePAPER program and the accompanying Action Plan for the period 2023-2025;</li> <li>• Adoption of a bylaw – methodology for the regulation of administrative procedures, in accordance with the Law on the Register of Administrative Procedures;</li> <li>• Administrative procedures for citizens should be made available from 1 January 2023;</li> <li>• Administrative requirements that represent the preconditions for business activities of economic operators should be made available from 1 January 2021;</li> <li>• Administrative procedures implemented by local self-government units should be made available from 1 January 2025;</li> <li>• Publication of 27 digital services from MIA and MCTI competencies;</li> </ul>





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis and preparation of recommendations for optimization of administrative procedures for citizens;</li> <li>• Implementation of training for civil servants for administrative procedures optimization.</li> </ul>		
<b>COMMITMENT 7</b> <b>Establishing and developing a system for electronic reporting, response and monitoring of violence involving children, prevention and support of victims – “I protect you” platform</b>			
Competent institution name	Office for Information Technologies and E-Government		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
		✓	
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National platform “I keep you safe”, <a href="https://cuvamte.gov.rs/">https://cuvamte.gov.rs/</a></li> </ul>		
Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)	<p>The commitment calls for the development of an electronic platform for registration, reaction and monitoring of different forms of violence involving children, and is planned to be implemented through the following activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. establishment of a system for electronic reporting, response and monitoring of violence involving children, prevention and support of victims – “I keep you safe” platform developed (<i>activity 1</i>)</li> <li>2. platform piloting (<i>activity 2</i>)</li> <li>3. implementation of <i>online</i> training for students and teachers (<i>activity 3</i>)</li> <li>4. uploading educational materials for students, teachers and citizens (<i>activity 4</i>)</li> <li>5. monitoring the situation through publication of statistics on violence involving children (<i>activity 5</i>).</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p>The National platform “I keep you safe”, available at: <a href="https://cuvamte.gov.rs/">https://cuvamte.gov.rs/</a>) was developed and released in March 2021(<i>activity 1</i>), with the aim of improving coordination and strengthening cross-sectoral cooperation between all competent institutions in the fight against all forms of violence involving children. The platform currently has two of the three planned components fully developed and functional – a component dedicated to <i>online</i> training for students, employees and parents and a component for raising awareness, information and education, while the development of the component that should provide for electronic reporting of violence is</p>		



still underway. In that sense, in December 2021, a Protocol was signed between seven ministries and the Office for Information Technologies and the e-Government on the provision of cross-sectoral services using the “I keep you safe” software solution, with the aim of protecting against abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation of children. At this point, work is being done on planning and developing a software solution that will enable any report of violence to be adequately recorded so that the status and course of the report are available at any moment, and, if the case file has not been closed yet, so that the concrete reason for that can be seen. The aim is to have a detailed analysis of all reports in one place, which will allow insight into how each report is handled and where the problems are (for more information, please visit: <https://www.ite.gov.rs/vest/5934/cuvam-te-platforma-za-zastitu-dece-od-zlostavljanja-zanemarivanja-nasilja-i-eksploatacije.php>). Due to the complexity and the need for all authorities to join the network, there has been a significant delay from the deadlines set out in the Action Plan for the establishment of a fully operational component for reporting violence involving children. Bearing all this in mind, i.e., that two of the three components have been developed and are functional, **limited progress has been made in implementing the first activity within this commitment.**

Prior to its launch, the platform was piloted (*activity 2*) with all stakeholders who had participated in the process of its development (administration and civil society organizations) and this **activity was implemented completely.**

From the moment the platform was released in March 2021, *online* training has been made available to users (*activity 3*), with a purpose to enable students, parents and employees to acquire key knowledge and competences in the area of peer violence prevention in an easy and reliable manner. The training was designed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development to comprise tried and tested knowledge and skills that will elevate the competencies of all three groups on this subject. The platform integrates interactive quizzes and a reward system and can be accessed at any time from any device. Currently, there are 10 *online* trainings (one for participants, six for school and preschool employees and three for parents) available, while about 1,450 schools in Serbia have so far joined the employee training segment.

- Online training for students, available at: <https://cuvamte.gov.rs/obuke/onlajn-obuka-za-ucenike/>
- Online training for employees (teachers), available at: <https://cuvamte.gov.rs/obuke/onlajn-obuke-za-zaposlene/>
- Online training for parents, available at: <https://cuvamte.gov.rs/obuke/onlajn-obuke-za-roditelje/>

The segment that includes *online* training is continuously developing, with the introduction of new trainings for all three target groups, and given the above, **this activity has been implemented in full.**



	<p>As with <i>online</i> training, from the moment the platform was released, an abundance of information and educational materials were made available to users (<b>activity 4</b>). The platform contains two informative-educational sections with a number of useful information that is important for identifying and responding in cases of violence involving children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section “What is violence?”, available at: <a href="https://cuvamte.gov.rs/sta-je-nasilje/sta-je-nasilje/">https://cuvamte.gov.rs/sta-je-nasilje/sta-je-nasilje/</a></li> <li>• Section “Current Affairs” with regularly published informative texts on the subject of violence, available at: <a href="https://cuvamte.gov.rs/aktuelnosti/svi-tekstovi/">https://cuvamte.gov.rs/aktuelnosti/svi-tekstovi/</a>.</li> </ul> <p>There are also various videos available, aimed at easily informing and educating all target groups on various issues related to violence involving children (videos available at: <a href="https://cuvamte.gov.rs/#video">https://cuvamte.gov.rs/#video</a>). Nearly 30,000 users are currently registered on the educational part of the platform, of which over 4,800 students, 1,700 parents and more than 23,000 teachers. This component is also continuously developed through the regular publication of new content. Given the above, <b>the fourth activity has been fully implemented</b>.</p> <p>Finally, the last activity within this commitment related to the development of the system for monitoring the situation through the maintenance and publication of statistics on the platform (<b>activity 5</b>) <b>has not been started</b> since the precondition for its implementation is the establishment of a component that enables electronic reporting of violence.</p> <p>Overall, given the degree of implementation of the activities making up this commitment, and in particular the fact that the component for reporting violence is not yet functional, <b>limited progress has been achieved in the implementation of the commitment</b>.</p>
<p>Further steps</p>	<p>Until December 2022 the platform was running smoothly - training and informative content had been regularly uploaded, and promotional material (digital and print) has been prepared as well, to be distributed using all channels. These activities will continue in the upcoming period. It is planned that, at the end of December 2022, all institutions within the Ministry of Education (educational institutions, School Administrations, Education Inspection and Department of Human and Minority Rights at the Ministry of Education) should start using the system for reporting violence in their daily work. The system for <i>online</i> reporting by citizens, as well as for the networking between the 7 line Ministries with competencies in this field (Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Information and Telecommunications, MoLEVSA, Ministry of Family Care and Demographics and Ministry of Health) is expected to become fully functional in 2023.</p>



<b>COMMITMENT 8</b>			
<b>Amendment of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance</b>			
Competent institution name	Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
	✓		
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additions and amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance (“Official Gazette of the RS”, No. 120/04, 54/07, 104/09, 36/10 and 105/21) adopted, <a href="https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2004/120/7/reg">https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2004/120/7/reg</a></li> </ul>		
Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)	<p>This commitment was carried over from the previous Action Plan for period 2018-2020 and it consists of two activities – finalising the Draft Law on the Additions and Amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance (<i>activity 1</i>) and referring the Draft Law on Additions and Amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance to the Government for reviewing and adopting it as a bill (<i>activity 2</i>).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p>Draft Law on Amendments and Additions to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance was prepared by a Special Working Group composed of representatives of government bodies, the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection and other bodies and organisations, with the participation of two civil society representatives on behalf of the National Convent for EU. After the public debate had been conducted (available at: <a href="http://mduls.gov.rs/javne-rasprave-i-konsultacije/javna-rasprava-o-naertu-zakona-o-izmenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-slobodnom-pristupu-informacijama-od-javnog-znacaja/?script=cir">http://mduls.gov.rs/javne-rasprave-i-konsultacije/javna-rasprava-o-naertu-zakona-o-izmenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-slobodnom-pristupu-informacijama-od-javnog-znacaja/?script=cir</a>) and the Draft text subsequently harmonized with comments from SIGMA and opinions from the competent government bodies, the MPALSG finalized the Draft text <b>completing the first activity of the commitment (activity 1)</b>.</p> <p>At the proposal of this Ministry, the Government adopted the draft, putting forth the Bill on Amendments and Additions to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance for adoption at the National Assembly at the session held on 3 November 2021 (Law available at: <a href="https://www.pravno-informacioni-">https://www.pravno-informacioni-</a></p>		



	<p><a href="http://sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2004/120/7/reg">sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/skupstina/zakon/2004/120/7/reg</a>) (<i>activity 2</i>), which meant that the <b>second activity and the entire commitment were implemented in full.</b></p> <p>The adopted amendments and additions established the obligation for authorities to proactively publish information on their websites, improving transparency in the work of the authorities. In addition, there has been an expansion of the scope of information authorities must publish in their activity reports, the publication of which is mandatory, and fines are prescribed for non-compliance with this obligation. The circle of persons who are appointed as authorities obliged to act under the law has been expanded, and both legal and functional independence of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance has been improved. A procedure has been prescribed to prevent abuse of the right of information seekers to initiate misdemeanour proceedings due to violations prescribed in the Law, without previously having submitted complaints to the Commissioner. Finally, in the event that the authorized person, or the manager of a body (if no authorized person has been designated) fails to respond to a request for access to information within the time limits prescribed for processing the request, a fine, in a fixed amount, has been prescribed.</p>		
Further steps	/		
<p><b>COMMITMENT 9</b></p> <p><b>Creating legal basis for the establishment of a central web portal displaying all procedures for environmental impact assessment, as well as procedures for strategic environmental impact assessment at the national, provincial and local levels</b></p>			
Competent institution name	Ministry of Environment Protection		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
	✓		
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Law on Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment – Article 34, <a href="https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/sites/default/files/inline-files/ZAKON%20%20STRATESKOJ%20JAVNA%20RASPRAVA.pdf">https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/sites/default/files/inline-files/ZAKON%20%20STRATESKOJ%20JAVNA%20RASPRAVA.pdf</a></li> </ul>		



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public debate on Draft Law on Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment, <a href="https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/lat/saopstenja/najave/javni-poziv-za-ucesse-u-javnoj-raspravi-o-nacrtu-zakona-o-strateskoj-proceni-uticaja-na-zivotnu-sredinu">https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/lat/saopstenja/najave/javni-poziv-za-ucesse-u-javnoj-raspravi-o-nacrtu-zakona-o-strateskoj-proceni-uticaja-na-zivotnu-sredinu</a></li> <li>• Draft Law on Environmental Impact Assessment – Article 44, <a href="https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/sites/default/files/inline-files/ZAKON%20%20PROCENI%20-PRECISCENA%20VERZIJA%20-%20SPREMNA%20ZA%20JAVNU%20RASPRAVU%20-%202022.12.2021..pdf">https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/sites/default/files/inline-files/ZAKON%20%20PROCENI%20-PRECISCENA%20VERZIJA%20-%20SPREMNA%20ZA%20JAVNU%20RASPRAVU%20-%202022.12.2021..pdf</a></li> <li>• Public debate on the Draft Law on Environmental Impact Assessment, <a href="https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/lat/saopstenja/najave/javni-poziv-za-ucesse-u-javnoj-raspravi-o-nacrtu-zakona-o-proceni-uticaja-na-zivotnu-sredinu">https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/lat/saopstenja/najave/javni-poziv-za-ucesse-u-javnoj-raspravi-o-nacrtu-zakona-o-proceni-uticaja-na-zivotnu-sredinu</a></li> </ul>
<p>Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)</p>	<p>The commitment entails introducing a legal basis for the establishment of a central web portal displaying all environmental impact assessment procedures and strategic environmental impact assessment procedures at the national, provincial and local levels. Implementation of this commitment will introduce the necessary amendments and additions into the two key regulations in this field – the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment and the Law on Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment – which will prescribe the establishment of the aforementioned web portal as a kind of searchable database of all environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental impact assessments. Thus, the commitment consists of three activities: drafting the above laws (<i>activity 1</i>), conducting public debates (<i>activity 2</i>) and adoption of these draft laws as Bills for the Serbian Government to propose for adoption, which contain the obligation to establish a central web portal (<i>activity 3</i>).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p>Both draft laws envisaged in the commitment have been elaborated (<i>activity 1</i>) and contain provisions prescribing the obligation to establish a central database and central web portal within 2 years from the day these laws enter into force, as foreseen by the commitment as well. Fines have also been prescribed for failure to comply with the obligation to upload all documents and data to the central web portal (Draft Law on the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment – Article 34, available at: <a href="https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/sites/default/files/inline-files/ZAKON%20%20STRATESKOJ%20JAVNA%20RASPRAVA.pdf">https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/sites/default/files/inline-files/ZAKON%20%20STRATESKOJ%20JAVNA%20RASPRAVA.pdf</a>, Draft Law on Environmental Impact Assessment – Article 44, available at: <a href="https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/sites/default/files/inline-files/ZAKON%20%20PROCENI%20-PRECISCENA%20VERZIJA%20-">https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/sites/default/files/inline-files/ZAKON%20%20PROCENI%20-PRECISCENA%20VERZIJA%20-</a></p>



	<p><a href="#">%20SPREMNA%20ZA%20JAVNU%20RASPRUVU%20-%202022.12.2021..pdf</a>). Hence, <b>the first activity within this commitment has been implemented in full.</b></p> <p>The prepared draft laws have been subjected to the public debate process in the period from 24 December 2021 to 10 January 2022 (<i>activity 2</i>), which means that <b>the second activity has been implemented in full</b> as well (public debate on the Draft Law on Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment: <a href="https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/lat/saopstenja/najave/javni-poziv-za-ucisce-u-javnoj-raspravi-o-nacrtu-zakona-o-strateskoj-proceni-uticaja-na-zivotnu-sredinu">https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/lat/saopstenja/najave/javni-poziv-za-ucisce-u-javnoj-raspravi-o-nacrtu-zakona-o-strateskoj-proceni-uticaja-na-zivotnu-sredinu</a>; public debate on the Draft Law on the Environmental Impact Assessment: <a href="https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/lat/saopstenja/najave/javni-poziv-za-ucisce-u-javnoj-raspravi-o-nacrtu-zakona-o-proceni-uticaja-na-zivotnu-sredinu">https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/lat/saopstenja/najave/javni-poziv-za-ucisce-u-javnoj-raspravi-o-nacrtu-zakona-o-proceni-uticaja-na-zivotnu-sredinu</a>).</p> <p>Regarding the last activity (<i>activity 3</i>) in which the Government was to adopt bills for these laws and submit them to the National Assembly for adoption, its implementation was delayed as early parliamentary elections were called in February 2022, meaning that the Government remained in a technical mandate. As the new Government was formed in late October 2022, <b>the third activity under this commitment is expected to be implemented by the end of the current year.</b></p> <p>Bearing all this in mind, <b>significant progress has been made within this commitment.</b></p>		
Further steps	Further steps include the implementation of legislative procedures and the adoption of the laws covered by this commitment.		
<p><b>COMMITMENT 10</b></p> <p><b>Improving the management of access to data exchanged in the public administration system</b></p>			
Competent institution name	Office for information Technologies and E-Government		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of the state of play regarding generation and use of data in the selected LSGU – the City of Kragujevac, <a href="http://bitly.ws/x2Rh">http://bitly.ws/x2Rh</a></li> </ul>		
			✓



<p>Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)</p>	<p>The commitment includes improving access to public sector data, within the public administration system, by improving data exchange between the provincial, local and central levels and ensuring legal and organizational enforcement mechanisms, which will enable implementation, given the independence of local self-government. This commitment is planned to be implemented through five activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analysis of the state of play regarding the generation and use of data in the selected LSGU (which data is collected or generated, what is their quality, how long it takes, for what purpose and who generates them, how often and in what format, how they are kept and what they are used for, who uses them and how, to whom are reports on the matter submitted and on which grounds, and who manages the aforementioned data);</li> <li>2. Setting priorities among data sets based on purpose, use value and central level requirements based on the Analysis, as well as the development of general recommendations for data opening in selected LSGs;</li> <li>3. Development of an open data structure model for priority sets based on the Analysis and priorities set;</li> <li>4. Preparing recommendations and models for amendment/adoption of internal acts for institutionalization of the data-opening process;</li> <li>5. Training and technical support for the implementation of models developed and publication on the open Data Portal.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p><b>The first activity within the commitment has been implemented in full</b> by the City of Kragujevac being selected as the local self-government in which an analysis of the state of play regarding data generation and use will be carried out, i.e., the way data flow from local to national government level (<b>activity 1</b>). The analysis showed, among other things, that out of the 80 reports that the City of Kragujevac provided to the government bodies, 40% were delivered in hard copy and 60% in digital form, while the most frequently used report formats were word and pdf formats . However, a significant number was also submitted through direct entry into the appropriate information system or in the form of an <i>excel</i> document (for more information, please visit: <a href="http://bitly.ws/x2Rh">http://bitly.ws/x2Rh</a>).</p> <p>However, unlike the first, <b>the implementation of the remaining four activities did not start</b> during the implementation period of the Action Plan (<b>activities 2-5</b>). The significant delay in implementation occurred primarily as the city administration in the City of Kragujevac, shortly after being selected as the pilot local self-government unit, underwent reorganization, and the situational analysis had to wait for the new structure to be established. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic was a major challenge in terms of available capacities of the</p>
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	Office for Information Technology and E-Government, as the development of digital services, as well as the collection and processing of pandemic-related data, were given priority over the past two years. In this regard, giving priority to these tasks and reallocation of human resources also reflected on the implementation of other activities under this commitment and resulted in implementation of most activities not having begun, or showing significant delays, so <b>there is a significant delay in the implementation of the entire commitment.</b>		
Further steps	/		
<b>COMMITMENT 11</b>			
<b>Development of a single information platform for monitoring project co-financing in the field of public information</b>			
Competent institution name	Ministry of Culture and Information <sup>43</sup>		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
			✓
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The minutes from the OGP Working Group meeting, <a href="https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1">https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1</a></li> </ul>		
Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)	<p>The commitment consists of three activities: analysis of the legislative framework and comparative practices in implementing information platforms for monitoring the implementation of public competitions, with technical specification for its drafting (<i>activity 1</i>), adoption of the Law on Amendments and Additions to the Law on Public Information and Media which would make the use of the platform a legal obligation for all bodies opening and conducting public competitions in this field and prescribe its content and manner of functioning (<i>activity 2</i>), as well as the formation and technical design of the information platform (<i>activity 3</i>).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p>The Ministry of Culture and Information prepared a detailed technical specification for the preparation of the platform envisaged in this commitment and submitted it to BIRN (as the proposer of this commitment) and the</p>		

<sup>43</sup> The Ministry of Culture and Information ceased to exist on the day of entry into force of the Law on Amendments and Additions to the Law on Ministries (“Official Gazette of the RS”, No. 116/22), and the scope of competence of this Ministry in the field of information has been transferred to the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications.



	<p>Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government (as the coordinator of the Open Government Partnership) to collect comments. This specification has gone a step further than was foreseen by the commitment and provided for digitalization of the entire project co-financing process – from the application submission process to the publication of supported media content, not only the reporting on competition implementation and the allocated budget funds. Hence, <b>the first activity within this commitment has been implemented in full (activity 1).</b></p> <p>When it comes to the adoption of the Law on Amendments and Additions to the Law on Public Information and Media, which would make the use of the platform legally compulsory (<b>activity 2</b>), despite intensive work on the preparation of the said legislation, the activity concerned was not implemented during the Action Plan implementation period. Although a working version of the draft law was elaborated, its finalization and the adoption process did not take place, due to the early parliamentary elections that were called in February 2022 and the Serbian Government's technical mandate, which lasted until the end of October 2022. Hence, <b>significant delay is observed for this activity.</b></p> <p>Significant delays in the implementation of the previous activity have also directly affected the establishment of the information platform itself (<b>activity 3</b>), as it is necessary for its development and functioning to have the administrative bodies legally obliged to use it. In this sense, <b>the third activity within this commitment has not been started.</b></p> <p>In view of the previous, <b>there is significant delay in implementation of the entire commitment.</b></p>
<p>Further steps</p>	<p>Since the formation of the Government in late October 2022 allowed for legislative activities to reprise, the following steps include continuation of drafting and adoption of the Law on Amendments and Additions to the Law on Public Information and Media, which is a necessary precondition for the creation of the platform foreseen in this commitment.</p>



<b>COMMITMENT 12</b>			
<b>Introduction of the obligation to conduct a public debate when determining topics important for the realization of public interest in the territory for which a public call is announced in the field of public information</b>			
Competent institution name	Ministry of Culture and Information		
Progress evaluation (implementation level)	Full implementation or significant progress	Limited progress	Not initiated or with significant delay
			✓
Evidence of progress assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on the establishment of a Working Group, <a href="https://www.kultura.gov.rs/vest/7137/formirana-radna-grupa-za-izradu-radne-verzije-nacrta-zakona-o-izmenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-javnom-informisanju.php">https://www.kultura.gov.rs/vest/7137/formirana-radna-grupa-za-izradu-radne-verzije-nacrta-zakona-o-izmenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-javnom-informisanju.php</a></li> <li>The minutes from the OGP Working Group meeting, <a href="https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1">https://ekonsultacije.gov.rs/ogpPage/1</a></li> </ul>		
Description of the results (rationale supporting assessment)	<p>This commitment foresees amendments and additions to the Law on Public Information and the Media and the accompanying bylaws, introducing obligations for public administration bodies implementing competitions in the public information domain, to organize public debates prior to opening these competitions for the purpose of determining the topics relevant to the public interest in the area of public information on the territory for which the contest is being held. In this respect, it consists of forming a working group to prepare the working text of the draft law (<i>activity 1</i>), drafting the law itself (<i>activity 2</i>) and adoption of that draft as a Bill by the Government, which contains solutions foreseen by the commitment (<i>activity 3</i>).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Description of the results</u></b></p> <p><b>The first activity of forming a working group was fully implemented</b> within the foreseen time (<i>activity 1</i>), with the Working Group for the elaboration of a working text of the Draft Law on Additions and Amendments to the Law on Public Information and the Media established by a Decision of the Minister of Culture and Information dated 30 June 2021 (information on the establishment of the Working Group available at: <a href="https://www.kultura.gov.rs/vest/7137/formirana-radna-grupa-za-izradu-radne-verzije-nacrta-zakona-o-izmenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-javnom-informisanju.php">https://www.kultura.gov.rs/vest/7137/formirana-radna-grupa-za-izradu-radne-verzije-nacrta-zakona-o-izmenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-javnom-informisanju.php</a>).</p>		



	<p>The drafting process is still under way (<i>activity 2</i>), as legislative activities have been stopped when parliamentary elections were called. In other words, the Draft Law has not been finalized or sent to the Government for consideration and decision-making within the period covered by this Action Plan, given the Government’s technical mandate, which lasted until the end of October 2022 and election of the new Government. As a result, <b>there are significant delays from the planned deadlines in the implementation of the second activity.</b></p> <p>In line with this delay, <b>the implementation of the third activity</b> within which the Government was to adopt a Bill on Additions and Amendments to Law on Public Information and Media <b>has not been started (activity 3)</b> and <b>the implementation of the entire commitment has been significantly delayed.</b></p>
<p>Further steps</p>	<p>Since the formation of the Government in late October 2022 allowed for legislative activities to reprise, the next steps include continuation of drafting and adoption of the Law on Amendments and Additions to the Law on Public Information and Media.</p>

## 5. LESSONS LEARNED

In an effort to make its administration a quality service to citizens, with high standards of openness and transparency, the Republic of Serbia continued its efforts towards building an open government during the fourth OGP cycle. In that sense, this cycle, which encompasses the period of preparation and implementation of the Action Plan for the period 2020-2022, has brought about further progress in different fields and aspects of OGP participation, but it has also pointed out certain shortcomings that leave room for improvement in the upcoming cycles. This is how lessons learned from the previous cycle can be observed, as positive practices that need to be continued, on one hand – and as aspects of OGP participation that need to be further developed, on the other.

First of all, and especially given the broader context and the fact that the new Standards for participation and co-creation had been adopted in the middle of the previous OGP cycle in the Republic of Serbia, it is very important to note that **all standards provided for in this document have been achieved**, which is supported by the findings presented in this report.

As for **lessons learned on the practices to be continued**, the fourth OGP cycle demonstrated the importance of *continual promotional activities aimed at raising awareness* about the principles of open government, both among administrative bodies and CSOs and other stakeholders. The events organized primarily as part of the OGP Week showed a growing interest in topics covered by OGP, although the events were not easy to implement, due to pandemic-related circumstances. Also, *the organization of events in an online format* due to pandemic measures (whether it was Working Group meetings or wider groups) has proven very effective and allowed for remote participation, which has particularly encouraged a wider participation of CSOs based outside the capital. Furthermore, one of the lessons learned pertains to *encouraging and increasing the prevalence of commitments related to sectoral public policies* such as the environment, health, education, media, etc. With that intention, at the very beginning of the Action Plan drafting process, special consultation



meetings were organized on several important “sector topics” that resulted in two environmental commitments being included the Action Plan, two commitments related to public information and the media and a “multi-sectoral” commitment pertaining to peer violence (cross-cutting the sectors of education, social policy and internal affairs). In this way, almost a half of the commitments were directed at implementing OGP values in fields of particular importance for citizens. Another important step forward is the involvement of more bodies responsible for commitment implementation, i.e., ***providing a more uniform distribution of responsibilities to competent institutions***, which, among other things, speaks to a better understanding of the OGP within the administration. In addition to the above positive experiences from the fourth cycle, it is certainly necessary to continue with the previously established practices that have proven to be effective, such as ***holding Working Group meetings in smaller groups during the process of drafting action plans, keeping the Working Group continually open for the participation of stakeholders, regular reviews and reports on the implementation of action plans, involvement of local self-governments in national OGP processes***, etc.

On the other hand, in relation to lessons learned in terms of room for improvement, ***the need has been observed to strengthen the position and role of the Stakeholder Forum, with a special focus on further development of cooperation and improvement of CSO participation in OGP processes, especially when deciding on proposals that will be included in the action plan and their definition***. In this respect, and with a view to provide a dialog with decision-makers at the highest level, OGP issues were included in the mandate of the Public Administration Reform Council, as a body composed of the relevant ministers. Full effects can be expected in the next OGP cycle when this mechanism takes hold in practice. In addition, one of the lessons learned, which corresponds to the recommendations of the NRM from the previous two cycles, concerns ***strengthening the transformative potential of the commitments*** contained in action plans, which in other words means engaging and undertaking more ambitious commitments that would lead to significant reform progress. In direct relation to the above, there is also a need ***for greater willingness of certain key administrative bodies*** (such as the Ministry of Finance) to engage in concrete measures that would significantly improve the current situation, especially in areas such as government integrity and fiscal transparency. Finally, the fourth cycle has also shown ***a certain decline in civil society engagement in OGP processes and a somewhat more passive role compared to previous cycles***, which can certainly be attributed CSOs’ focus on their own challenges regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, but also the inability to promote OGP more intensively, especially at the local level, due to these circumstances. Finally, although these aspects cannot be directly influenced through OGP processes, during the previous cycle, ***the impact of frequent parliamentary elections on the co-creation process, but also the implementation of action plans***, became particularly visible. The technical mandate of the Government, which lasts from the moment elections are called until a new government is elected, significantly lowers the efficiency of the Working Group’s operation, but it also reflects directly on the implementation of certain commitments that involve the adoption of legislation, as there are no legislative activities during this time. In addition, the quality and ambition of the commitments contained in the last Action Plan has been significantly affected by certain parallel reform processes that are taking place in the Republic of Serbia, namely the creation and adoption of public policy documents in different areas of importance for the open government values. Thus, for example, during the previous cycle, the Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia was elaborated and adopted for the period 2021-2030 (with three programs in the field of improving public policy management and regulatory reform, public finance management and local self-government reform), as were the revised Action Plan for Chapter 23, Strategy for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2022-2030 and the Program for e-Government Development in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020-2022, ***which included***



*many of the activities important for the OGP process, which could have been a part of the Action Plan, particularly in the area of public accountability and fiscal transparency for which there is a distinct lack of commitments in the OGP action plans.*

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking into account the lessons learned presented in the previous section of the Report, special attention should be paid to the following aspects in the next OGP cycle:

- Steps should be taken to **further improve the cooperation of the government bodies with CSOs**, in particular in the review and final formulation of the commitments contained in the Action Plan, and above all through the provision of a continuous dialog between the commitment proposer and the competent authorities, but also through the active use of the Public Administration Reform Council as a body composed of decision-makers;
- one of the priorities in the next cycle should include **further development, full affirmation and use of the OGP Section on the eConsultations Portal**, so that it fully meets all the needs for information, but also participation in the processes of creating and monitoring the implementation of action plans. To that end, the practice from the previous cycle has shown the need for further improvement of the existing and development of additional features on the Portal.
- **Continuous promotional activities and work on raising awareness of OGP processes** should be used as instruments to encourage greater involvement of CSOs, but also more active engagement of government bodies, especially those responsible for specific sectoral policies of particular importance for citizens;
- bearing in mind **that certain commitments under the Action Plan for period 2020-2022, which had been expected to produce significant reform results, could not be fully implemented due to the technical mandate of the Government and the absence of legislative activities** (e.g., obligations 9, 11 and 12), their inclusion in the new Action Plan should be considered, with a certain upgrade;
- further efforts should be made in the next cycle to **raise the level of ambition of the commitments** contained in the Action Plan, so that their implementation delivers important reform results in the areas covered by the OGP.