



CROSSCUTTING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM STRATEGY 2015 – 2020

Annual Monitoring Report 2016

Tirana, March 2017

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of the annual progress report of the Crosscutting Public Administration Reform Strategy 2015-2020 is to review and evaluate the overall progress of the implementation of this strategy based on four main priorities and respective objectives of 2016.

The findings of this report are encouraging. Two years after the beginning of the implementation of the strategy in April 2014, **76% (62 sub-activities out of 82) of the sub-activities envisaged in the Strategy began to be implemented, while 31 of them are fully delivered.** Compared to 2015, when only just 6 activities were accomplished, 25 sub-activities are fully accomplished in 2016, which means 19 more sub-activities.

Progress has been made towards further development of the strategic framework and good coordination of policies and projects in various sectors. The National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020-II and 25 strategic documents (in the frame of the NSDI) were adopted. The second cycle of the National Strategic Projects Pipeline was also updated and launched for 5 priority sectors: transport, energy, environment, social infrastructure and business infrastructure sector. A more coherent approach to medium-term budget planning was achieved compared to 2015 by reducing the financial gap with about 29% in 2016 (94% in 2015 to 65% in 2016). Thanks to a well-coordinated prioritization, the approval of seven funds/grants was made possible through the European Union schemes, as part of the National Strategic Projects Pipeline.

Progress has been made in terms of establishing an integrated information system of policy development and monitoring, which contributes to ***the access and orientation towards performance of policy planning*** and budgetary processes and to the improvement of the institutional capacity to monitor the results at strategy levels. The drafting document of the Integrated Planning System Information System (IPSIS)¹ was adopted, as well as the respective processes were completed regarding the finalization of the contract in order to make operational the **External Aid Management Information System (EAMIS)**. Both systems will enable the government's effectiveness in terms of tracking the status of implementation of policies and strategies by strengthening the outcome based monitoring mechanism.

Progress was achieved in regard to the establishment of legal and institutional mechanisms to ensure public participation in the consultation of public policies. The Public Notification and Consultation Electronic Registry www.konsultimipublik.gov.al, was launched in October 2016 as an important instrument for the accomplishment of the public consultation process under the standards required by Law No. 146/2014 "On the public notification and consultation". The correct use of the Public Notification and Consultation Electronic Registry will help to increase the standard of drafting legislation by making this a transparent and inclusive process. However, the increased use of the PNCER by ministries for the public consultation process, the establishment of a centralized reporting system, as well as, the publication of consultation reports are areas still to be improved.

¹ Integrated Planning System Information System

As part of the territorial reform and strengthening of new municipalities, the focus has been *to ensure methodological support for the organization and operation of new administrative units of the country and strengthening of the implementation capacity*. Within the first quarter of 2016, all municipalities were provided with an organizing model, which was developed according to the type of municipality with the help of UNDP/Star Project. 30 municipalities were assisted up to the end of 2016 in regard to the application of four models of the organization of new units as proposed and financed by the Council of Europe. This process will continue in 2017 and it will assist 20 other municipalities. The Program of the Council of Europe has helped with the training of 122 civil servants of local government in the context of capacity building for the management of human resources.

Progress achieved in 2016 consists in the drafting of the policy and legal framework, and the progress towards the gradual building of the necessary operation infrastructures of the services delivery. The long-term policy and legal papers were adopted for the provision of citizen centered services. The first Public Service Delivery Integrated Center (the first one-stop shop) was established in November 2016 in Kavaja, where the services of five public institutions are provided in one front office. In addition, the delivery of 206 services has been made possible in general. Setting new standards in terms of the customer service delivery at the front office (just like at the Front Office of ADISA in Tirana IPRO and Kavaja Integrated Center) appear to have significantly improved the management of the queue regarding the service delivery, therefore reducing it and increasing citizens' satisfaction with the services quality. **The number of central government services delivered with improved standards increased four times, thus reaching 206 services, while the number of front offices serving the citizens with improved standards grew from 15 to 25 front offices.** As of October 2016, the citizens are informed how to benefit 420 services of 10 institutions through ADISA Call Center service, thus meeting the need of informing citizens about the manner of benefitting the public services delivered by 10 institutions.

Further steps were taken towards human resource capacities evaluation. All these measures are intended to ensure neutrality and to ensure a transparent, impartial and meritocratic recruitment process. Tests for the recruitment procedures organized in 2016 were automatically generated and checked through the electronic system based on the field of knowledge for each procedure. **The bank of questions, through which the tests are automatically generated on the basis of the relevant field of knowledge, are further refined,** therefore contributing directly to increased transparency and professionalism of the organization of the recruitment procedures.

Progress has been made towards the development of further expansion of the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) in public administration institutions. Information for more than 11, 000 employees of 330 spending units, part of the civil service, was entered into the system **in 2016**. HRMIS includes all organization charts/staffing of state administration institutions, which are part of the civil service, while work has begun to include local government units and independent institutions. **The function of calculating the salaries based on their schemes and categories** was developed and integrated into the system. HRMIS wage module will enable not only automatic generation of wages, but it will also provide a high precision quality information and greater control of the salary fund management.

Development of ICT Infrastructure in order to enhance the efficiency of the work of public administration and to improve the transmission and flow of information has made progress with the presentation of the project about the Electronic Record and Document Management System (EDRMS) by conveying a clear vision of the efficiency and effectiveness increase within the government. This platform has a direct impact on reducing administrative barriers; therefore, it has an impact in terms of high performance of public administration activity. The ERDMS project is piloted for the first time in the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Transport.

Progress was achieved in the area of the implementation of activities related to the strengthening of the regime of declaration and audit of assets and cases of conflict of interest of public officials and protection of the rights of whistleblowers in cases of reporting abusive actions or corruption. Law no. 60/2016 "On the signaling and protection of whistleblowers" was adopted in June 2016 and the bylaws were adopted, thus setting the foundations for the installation of a corruption prevention mechanism, which is recognized and accepted by the best practices in the world.

Drafting and adoption of transparency programs by the public authorities still remains problematic, but there are a growing number of institutions that have fulfilled this obligation. During 2016, transparency programs were drafted in 46 institutions more, but human and financial capacities still remain a problem s in terms of properly implementing the law on the right to information.

Timely response of public institutions to the requests of the Ombudsman remains a concern. There is an increase of the number of recommendations accepted in general by the public administration institutions, whereas the percentage of recommendations implemented has decreased. While concerning the number of recommendations without a response, this was higher in 2016 compared to the number of recommendations without a response in 2015.

1. INTRODUCTION

Public administration reform is essential to Albania's integration process into the European Union. A professional public administration, based on meritocracy and able to provide quality services to the public, is a prerequisite for transparent and democratic governance. A well-defined strategic framework constitutes the foundation, upon which the implementation of public administration reform will be built.

Crosscutting Public Administration Reform Strategy, adopted in April 2015, serves as a strategic document guiding the reform of the administration, based on four main pillars, on clear objectives and on an action plan with specific activities.

Obtaining the status of candidate country as of 24 June 2014 marked an important step forward in the European integration process, which is a process that requires a professional administration and human resources and material resources to enable the implementation of policies and national objectives, which have been undertaken in the context of the fulfillment of obligations in this regard.

In this context, the vision that guides the strategy is as follows:

“Development of public administration, which provides high quality services for citizens and businesses in a transparent, effective, and efficient way through the use of modern technologies and innovative services and, that complies with the requirements of European integration through impartial, professional and accountable civil servants, part of efficient setups”

The implementation of this vision is based on the reforms that will be undertaken in four main priority areas aimed at further improving and developing the following:

- The policy making system and quality of legislation;
- The way of organization of public administration;
- The civil service and human resource management;
- The administrative procedures and oversights;

Implementation of the Strategy is carried out through activities, which are set out in the Action Plan 2015- 2017. In order to monitor the progress that has been made, a regular monitoring and evaluation system is operational, on the basis of which 8 regular quarterly reports were drafted during 2015-2016 focusing on continuous monitoring of the implementation of activities.

While the achievements of the strategy implementation and its impact are assessed on an annual basis through an assessment of success indicators defined according to the Strategy objectives. This report is the second evaluation report of the Strategy achievements.

Quarterly reports and the annual report are drafted by the Department of Public Administration and the Secretariat of the Public Administration Policy Management Group and the Minister of State for Public Administration and Innovation.

The monitoring reports are drafted in cooperation with all institutions involved and they are discussed in the "Civil Service and Human Resource Management" Thematic Group, and later adopted by the Integrated Policy Management Group for Governance and Public Administration.

The drafted reports and the outcomes serve as a basis for providing the necessary information

during the process, which is being carried out currently, the mid-term evaluation of the Crosscutting Public Administration Reform Strategy. The mid-term evaluation will focus on the progress of implementation of the Strategy in 2015-2017 (mid-2017). This evaluation will highlight the achievements of the first two years of the strategy in relation to the expected outcomes and the level of achievement of the objectives of the strategy. It will serve as a basis to assess the level of achievement of objectives for the first two years of implementation of the strategy and it will help to guide the policies, which have been set forth in the strategy in support of achieving the final goals of the strategy, as well as to guide the activities in 2018-2020. The evaluation process of the strategy will begin in March and is expected to be completed in July 2017.

2. OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE PROGRESS OF THE STRATEGY

As mentioned above, the evaluation of progress made towards the achievement of the Strategy objectives is carried out through the assessment indicators, which are stipulated in the Strategy. Meanwhile the evaluation of the implementation progress of the reforms, which are envisaged under the strategy, is based on the evaluation of the implementation of activities, which are set out in the Action Plan 2015 - 2017 (PARAP).

The Action Plan provides for the implementation of 53 core activities and 82 sub-activities. Due to monitoring effects, 82 Sub-activities are regarded and described below in the report as separate activities.

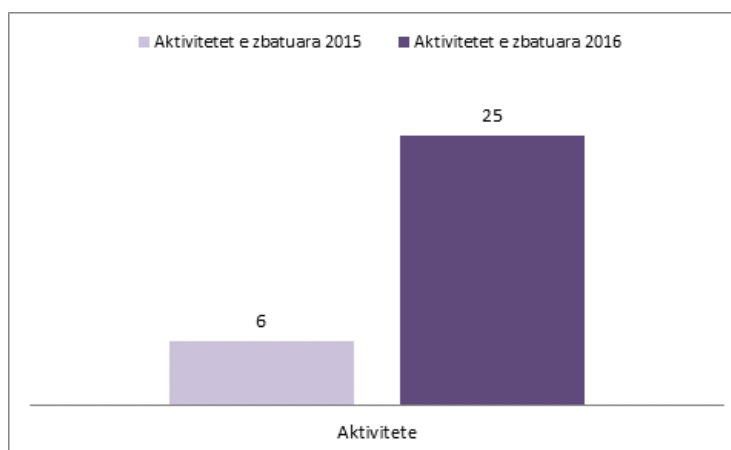
In order to monitor the implementation of the undertaken commitments regarding implementation of the outputs and activities in general, the monitoring process is performed at output level. Evaluation of the level and status of implementation of the Crosscutting Public Administration Reform Strategy activities is based on information provided by each responsible entity. DoPA has completed the evaluation of information during the second week of February 2017.

So far, 62 out of 82 sub-activities, which are foreseen in the Strategy Action Plan, are under implementation (Graph 2).

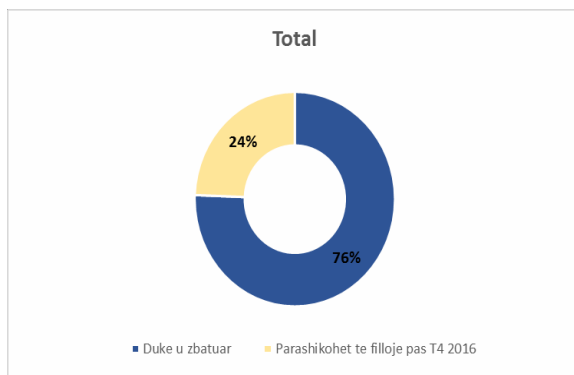
Out of a total of 62 sub-activities, 31 (or 50%) of them are fully implemented until now (Graph 3).

In 2016, 25 activities are fully implemented, which means 19 activities more than in 2015 when only 6 activities were accomplished (Graph 1).

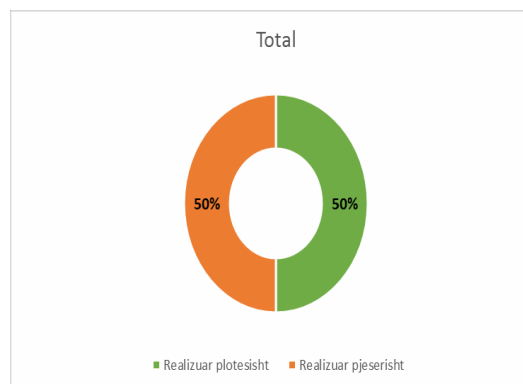
Graph 1: Activities implemented up to the end of 2016.



Graph 2: Overall status of the activities implementation



Graph 3: Progress of the outputs implementation



3. THE PROGRESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REFORMS IN THE FRAME OF EACH PRIORITY

3.1.1. Priority I: Policymaking and quality of legislation

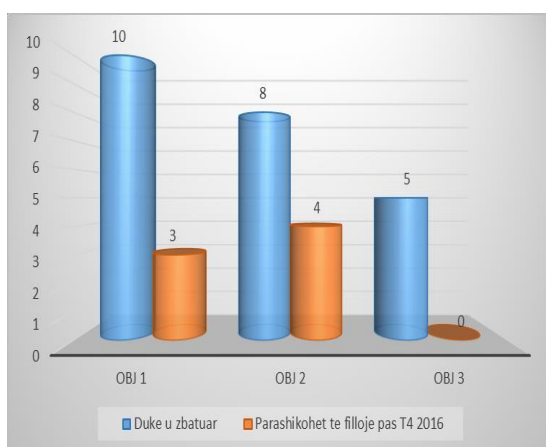
The main priorities in the area of policymaking and the quality of legislation of the Crosscutting Public Administration Reform focus on the following:

- *Improved planning and coordination policies to draft government strategic documents, which turn priorities into concrete actions.*
- *Transparent and all-inclusive system of drafting laws, which is based on the policies and, which ensures alignment with the acquis.*
- *Building of an effective monitoring and evaluation system of strategies, programs and legal framework in force, based on the following: (i) collection of data through a neutral and transparent process for drafting and implementation of strategies, programs and legislation, and (ii) drafting of analysis to evaluate the effects generated by the implementation.*

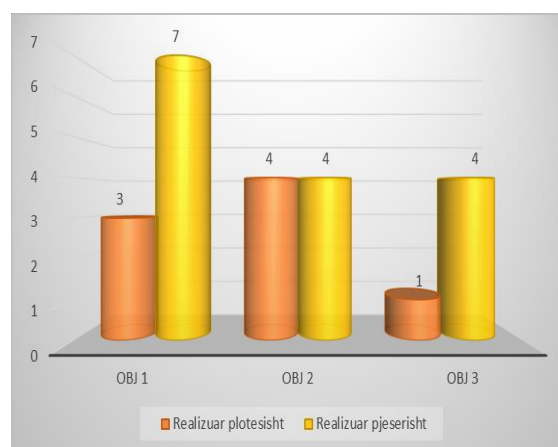
Compared with 2015, the implementation of 4 new activities started during 2016 while 8 activities were fully carried out. As shown in figures 4 and 5 below, 23 out of 30 sub-activities were implemented as provided for these objectives.

More progress has been made in Objective 2 "*transparent system of drafting laws, comprehensive, based on policy and ensures alignment with the acquis*", which has the largest number of fully delivered activities.

Graph 4: Number of sub-activities under implementation by objectives



Graph 5: Status of the implementation of sub-activities by objectives



Progress against each objective

Of the 13 activities foreseen under **Objective 1: “Improved planning and coordination policies to draft government strategic documents, which turn priorities into concrete actions”** most of them (10) have already begun implementation, while 3 activities were completely delivered in 2016.

Progress has been made towards further development of a Strategic Framework. In this context, the National Strategy for Development and Integration II 2015-2020 (NSDI) was approved upon the Decision of the Council Ministers No. 348, dated 11 May 2016. This document sets out the main strategic directions of development of the country for a 5-year period not only related to national development, but it also ensures, at the same time, policy guidance for an effective regional cooperation, as well as the enhancement of competitiveness through a regional approach regarding the relations of Balkan countries with the EU.

Additionally, the document reflects the agenda for a sustainable development at the global level, associated with the Sustainable Development Goals, thus aiming at achieving sustainable development in its 3 dimensions - economic, social and environmental - in a balanced and integrated manner.

NSDI II shows how the vision for the development and integration of the country will be achieved through policies and strategies aimed at the following:

1. Promotion of national development pace by generating a sustainable economic growth through macroeconomic and financial stability;
2. Achieving the standards that serve the citizens, increase welfare and ensure protection of their rights;
3. Transformation of Albania into a country with standards, which enable membership in the European Union;
4. Drafting policies that boost Albania's economic competitiveness and prospects through a more competitive and innovative business environment and sustainable use of resources, as well as competition with regional countries and beyond.

The strategy is based on growth model generated by promoting local and regional economic

potentials through efficient structural and sector policies, as well through the promotion of competitiveness and innovation. The document, as a development approach to enable the poles of local and regional economic development in order to generate growth and welfare of citizens, presents the future and the objectives regarding the development of the country.

In terms of planning, NSDI-II 2015 - 2020 is a key component and instrument of the Integrated Planning System (SPI)^{2,3} through which medium and long-term planning process is ensured by providing an integrated link between sector and crosscutting strategic documents, which guide policymaking at the highest level in regard to determining national priorities and strategic goals.

The NSDI document is harmonized in terms of time and content with a number of strategic documents, which are drafted in the same period with this document. It should be noted that the process of drafting NSDI II has proceeded in parallel with the programming documents of the institutions for the sectors, as well as with a series of reports and programming documents drawn up by development partners in the frame of the programming of development funds. This has created synergy in regard to the prioritization of policies and development funds programming for the reforms and the country's integration.

The 2015-2020 period of the NSDI II is harmonized with the period of the financial planning of the European Union (EU) from 2014 to 2020, the Lisbon strategy of EU by 2020, and three cycles of the Medium Term Budget Framework, with which the NSDI II is aligned. The novelty of this document is presented in its **focusing on key government priorities⁴**, as well as in its drafting based on the principle of "outcome oriented policies, **while it's the first time that policies and priorities are set out with clear, measurable and concrete indicators and targets**, which will monitor and evaluate the implementation of the strategy and the its impact in regard to advancing the country's development."

50 key Indicators, which represent the targets to be achieved by the government during 2016 -2020, have been selected. These indicators will measure country's development and integration progress and they will guide the programming of policies and concrete measures to achieve them as a condition for achieving the goals and the objectives of the NSDI.

Indicators of implementation monitoring, a total of 50 Indicators, are organized into two groups:

- 1) High-level development indicators with defined targets, which include: high-level macroeconomic indicators and indicators in the frame of integration commitments, as agreed with the EU, and;
- 2) Development indicators by sector, for the targets of which are provided references to sector and crosscutting strategic documents, including the following: sector indicators related to governance and competitiveness and sector indicators related to social policies and the sustainability of resources.

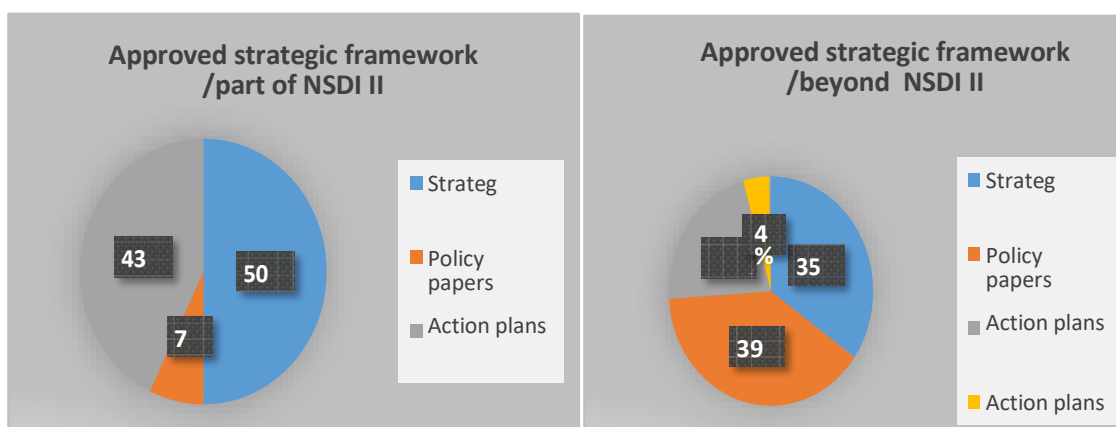
The national sector and crosscutting strategies and the whole framework of strategic documents are the main instruments for providing strategic planning oriented towards the political vision for the development of the country. Strategies are drafted as instruments,

² Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 692, 2005 "On the Integrated Planning System in Albania"

³ The Integrated Planning System (IPS) is a set of operational principles that ensures implementation in the most effective and harmonized manner of the policy planning and monitoring of government in general. The aim of the IPS is to ensure the link between policy and real opportunities of financing through the process of medium-term budgeting, or Medium Term Budget Program (MTBP), to achieve the policy objectives as intermediate steps to accomplish the NSDI II.

⁴ Which are monitored when delivered by the Priorities Delivery Unit / Units .

which are elaborated and broken down into programs to ensure their implementation and delivery at a sector or crosscutting level. A special attention was paid during the phase of strategies' drafting and during the quality assurance of drafted documents, so that they rely not only on a clear monitoring framework (win an action plan and clearly defined monitoring indicators), but also on an affordable financial framework and that they connected as closely as possible with the financial resources and the Medium Term Budget Program. In this context, by the end of 2016, 25 strategic documents (in the frame of the NSDI) were approved upon decisions of the Council of Ministers, while 5 strategies are still in the drafting stage. In this context, the basis of the abovementioned strategic framework has guided drafting in the respective year of three sector planning documents (justice, integrated water management reform and competitiveness & innovation) and two programs for sector reform (anti-corruption and transport).



An analysis of 22 their strategies and their action plans related to a detailed examination of sector and crosscutting strategies was carried out in 2016 with the assistance of OECD/SIGMA. Aspects of the findings related to sector and crosscutting strategies were analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses that affect the monitoring and reporting capacity, which are useful in this case for the improvement of the planning phase and the development of the strategic framework.

Analysis and detailed examination in the context of improving the planning phase relates to the following aspects:

- The quality of the objectives set in the strategy;
- The use of indicators;
- Determining the outputs and the outcomes;
- Institutional framework of monitoring;
- Reporting frequency;

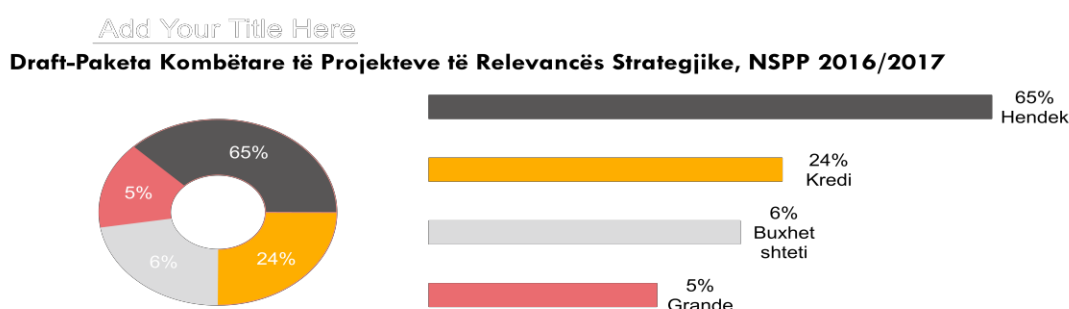
Given that the implementation of an efficient system either in the frame of planning and monitoring or in the frame of reporting requires necessary implementation capacities. The unit is undertaking a capacity evaluation process with OECD/SIGMA within the line ministries responsible for the drafting, implementation and reporting of strategies. This evaluation will help in terms of taking further measures to build human resources and existing capacities in order to develop an effective and qualitative system in central government bodies and ministries.

The analysis, which was carried out in 2016 regarding the drafting of reference strategic framework (sector and crosscutting strategies), showed the following:

- In general, the sector & crosscutting strategies tend to be consistent with the current Order on drafting the strategic framework, including the main chapters related to funding resources and monitoring system.
- All strategies include a medium-term implementation action plan covering a mid-term and long-term time horizon (five years).
- There is a relatively good quality of objectives in every strategy. The quantity (number) of objectives is well-balanced in general with an average of 3-5 objectives to be met in each pillar.
- All strategies show the structure, which is in charge of coordinating and monitoring the strategies.
- The drafted strategic framework is generally associated with the medium-term budgeting, thus resulting in a financial gap that doesn't accumulate more than 30% of the funds accommodated for the respective policies.

Functioning of the Integrated Policy Management Groups,⁵ which provide an integrated approach to the coordination and management of performance programming, implementation and monitoring of sector programs in regard to the achievement of Albania's European integration while sustainable development has continued in addition to the enhancement of the level of public initiatives coordination and ensuring of the harmonization of interventions across different sectors. Technical secretariats have been established in each of them and they are playing an important role in the daily coordination of processes, although there is a need to further build the capacities in regard to this new approach. As regards the other sectors, there are a number of developments within the thematic groups. Transport Thematic Group and Rural Development Thematic Group.

Box 1/Table 1:



Translation of the graph:

Albanian
Draft-Paketa Kombëtare e Projekteve
të Relevancës Strategjike, NSPP 2016/2017
Hendek
Kredi
Buxhet shteti
Grande

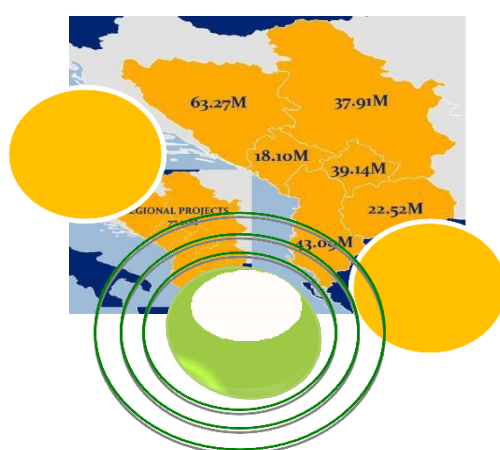
English
National Draft Package of
National Strategic Projects Pipeline, NSPP 2016/2017
Gap
Credit
State budget
Grants

Another progress, which is related to the process of updating and initiating the second

⁵ Integrated Policy Management Groups, established and operating under the Prime Minister's Order no. 129/2015: Good Governance and Public Administration Reform; Integrated Water Management; Employment and social sector; Competitiveness and Innovation.

cycle of the **National Strategic Projects Pipeline**,⁶ has been made in the frame of good coordination of the policies and projects across different sectors **for five priority sectors: transport, energy, environment** (water and sewerage, flood protection, air pollution) **social infrastructure sector** (education & health, sport, art, culture, support for prisons housing) **and business infrastructure sector** (marines, tourism and infrastructure marine & broadband). This process is being finalized. The NSPP is taking into consideration also the projects of cross-border effect, such as initiating projects that will be launched in the Italy Summit. **Compared to 2015, a more coherent approach has been achieved in terms of medium-term budget planning by reducing the financial gap with about 29% for 2016** (94% in 2015 to 65% in 2016) as presented above (Box 1).

A well-coordinated prioritization enables a smoother process for fund/grant raising through the European Union schemes currently listed in the National Strategic Project Pipeline where the Albanian government has received grants for **7 technical assistance projects and 2 investment projects**, as a co-financing (technical assistance projects may have the prospect of intervention as investments in infrastructure, in the medium term).



Albania ranked fourth in 2015 regarding the level of benefit from the funds allocated through the mechanism of WBIF **17 million Euro**, after Montenegro (52 million Euro), Kosovo (42 million Euro), Bosnia (31 million Euro).

As for 2016, it ranks second in the region with 36%, behind Serbia (41%), Kosovo (15%), Macedonia (4%) and Montenegro (3%) for absorption of funds, compared with the fourth (10%) in 2015.

Albania has received 27,265,000 more funds in 2016 compared to 2015

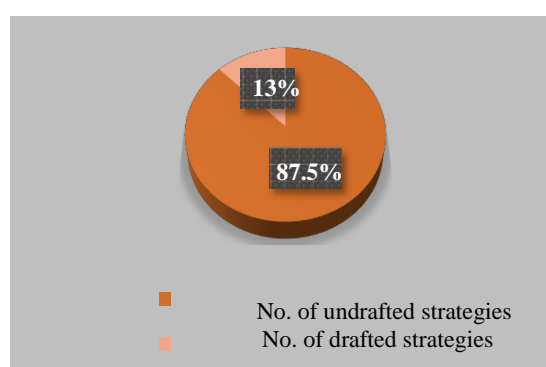
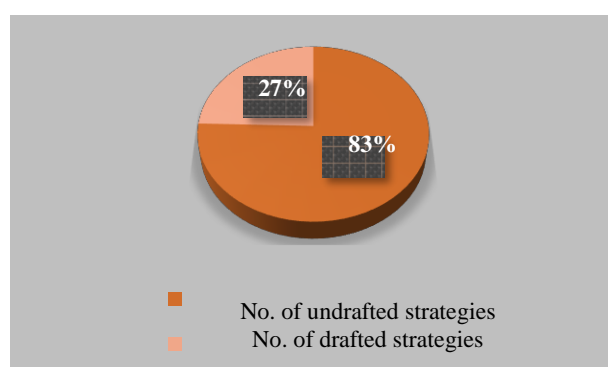
The above progress of the activities delivery has resulted in a significant improvement to the intended results under Objective I:

Graphics below present the progress made towards the targets set from 2015 to 2016.

87.75% of the strategic regulatory framework (sector strategies under the NSDI) *has been drafted and put into effect by the end of 2016, compared to 83% in 2015.*

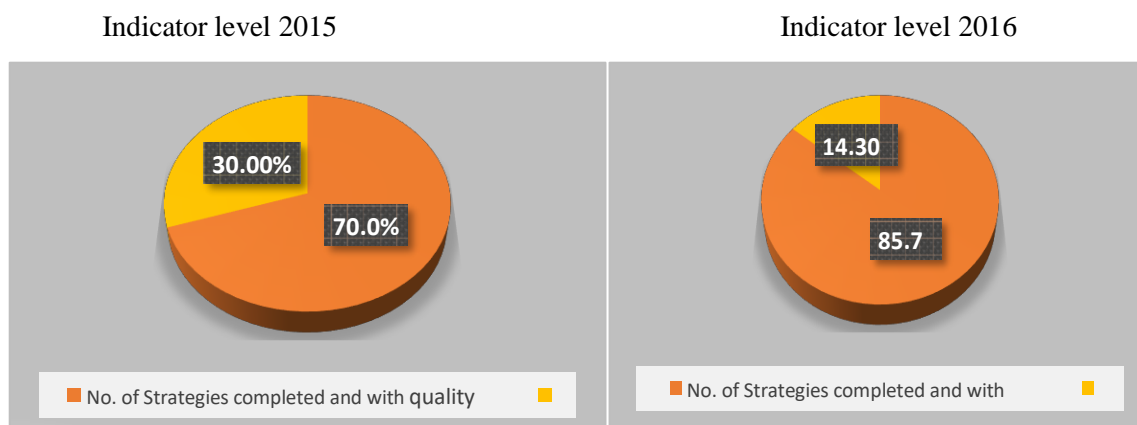
Indicator level 2015

Indicator level 2016

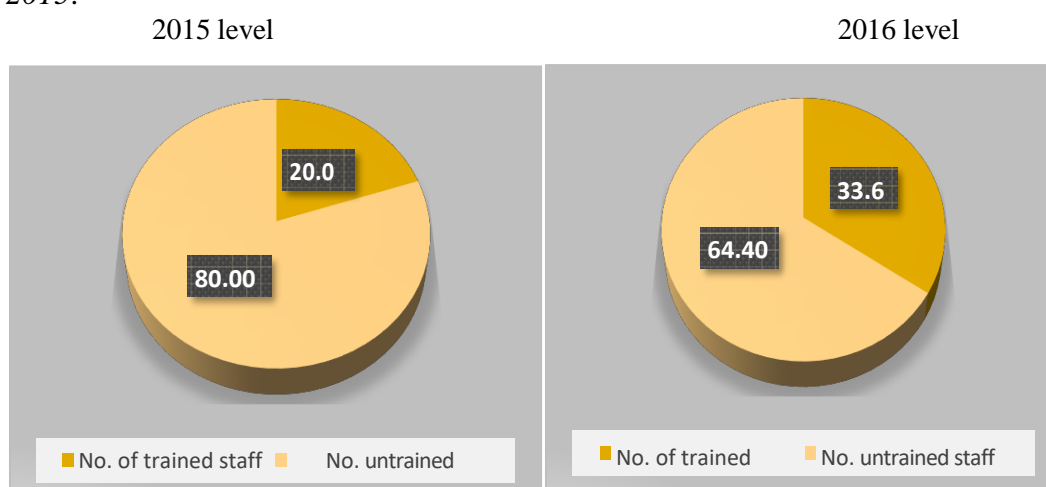


⁶ National Strategic Projects Pipeline

85.7% of the sector and crosscutting strategies were finished with good quality (with a costing of the action plan and with a set of indicators with relevant targets) as approved in 2016, compared to 70% in 2015.



33,6% of policymaking staff in line ministries were trained during 2016 and their capacities were enhanced in regard to planning issues, compared to 20% that was achieved in 2015.



In the context of the approach and orientation towards policy planning performance and budgeting processes and, in order to improve the institutional capacity to monitor the outcomes at strategy and program levels, the process has begun to establish an integrated information system in regard to the policy development and monitoring. After the needs assessment in relation to strategic planning and public policy planning, the **integrated planning System Information System (IPSIS)**⁷ design paper has been completed and approved and live presentations of the respective bids were made. In addition, the respective processes for the finalization of the contract have been completed respectively in order to set into operation the **External Aid Management Information System (EAMIS)**.

Both systems will enable the government's effectiveness in terms of tracking the status of implementation of policies and strategies by strengthening the monitoring mechanism based on results. This will be carried out by establishing a clear hierarchy of the main results of the

⁷ Information System for Integrated Planning System

strategy and policy indicators, based on program indicators as reflected in the medium-term budget planning and beyond.

The pilot process of the development and testing of the governance objectives and indicators within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) post-2015 has been carried out **in cooperation with the United Nations Program for Development (UNDP)**. Piloting has national and international dimensions. **At the national level, the pilot process provided an integration of good governance performance measures and indicators in the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI 2015-2020)**, as well as, capacity building in terms of collecting, monitoring and analyzing data for selected indicators as the basis for the strategy. At the global level, this process supports the Government of Albania (GoA) to share its experience in regard to informing about the development of the subsequent framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for the post-2015 agenda in the area of "rule of law, capable and effective institutions".

This process focuses its scope mainly on the principles that underpin good governance and innovation, accountability, transparency, participation and predictability.

In the frame of **Objective 2: “Transparent and all-inclusive system of drafting laws, which is based on the policies and, which ensures alignment with the acquis”** 8 (eight) out of the 12 foreseen sub-activities have started to be implemented, whereas 4 (four) of these sub-activities have been fully implemented in 2016.

Progress was made in terms of completing the legal and institutional mechanisms that ensure public participation in public policy consultations. After the adoption of the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 848, dated 07.10.2015 "On approval of Rules of creation and administration of the Electronic Registry for public notification and consultation" the Public Notification and Consultation Electronic Registry (PNCER), which is already accessible to the entire link www.konsultimipublik.gov.al, was established in October 2016.

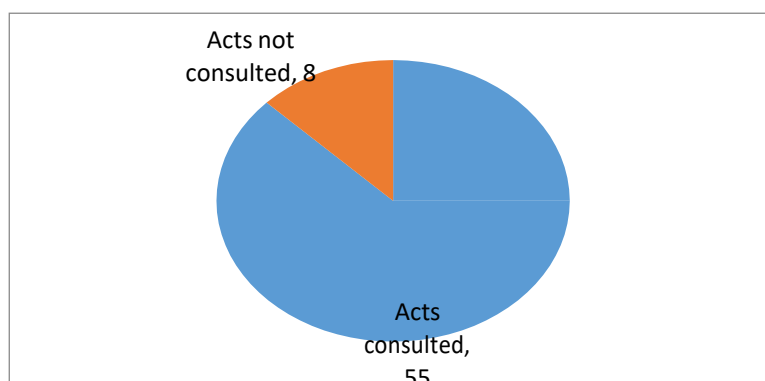
Launching of the PNCER enabled using of an important instrument for the achievement of the public consultation process in accordance with the standards required by Law no. 146/2014 "On the public notification and consultation".

The correct use of the Public Notification and Consultation Electronic Registry will help increase the standards of drafting the legislation in order to make this a transparent and inclusive process.

119 draft laws were passes by the Council of Ministers during 2016, of which 63 were subject to the law "On public notification and consultation". Ministries achieved their target to an extent of 87% in regard to the consultation of these laws where 53 laws were consulted while laws were not consulted.

Data on the drafted laws, which have passed through the public consultation procedure as a total and by ministries

Graph 5: Total



Source: Minister of State for Relations with the Parliament

Attention of monitoring hasn't focused only on carrying out the monitoring process, but also on evaluating the quality of this process. According to the assessment of the quality of the consultation process in 2015, it came out that ministries were away from carrying out the consultation process in accordance with the requirements set by law. Meeting the requirements of the law by the evaluation was considered to be the level of 60%, or 5:25 points.⁸

Meanwhile, in 2016, there was an increase of quality of consultation, which is estimated to be at 6:17 out of 8 maximum points.

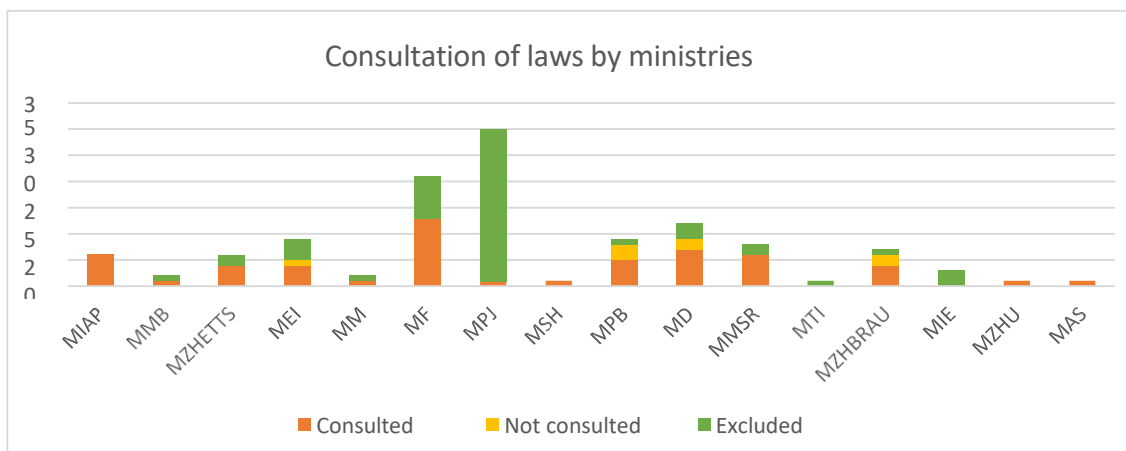
Percentage of legal acts that have passed through an extensive public consultation process and evidence of involvement of the public and stakeholders in the process in 2016 is at 87%. The quality of the consultation process is estimated to be at 6.17 points out of 8 points (maximum rating). Compared with 2015 shows a downward trend in the indicator value to legislation that passed the public consultation (97% in 2015) and an upward trend indicator for the quality of consultation (5.25 2015).

Among the ministries meeting the criteria are the Ministry of Finance, Minister of State for Innovation and Public Administration and the Ministry of Justice.

The following graph shows the total level of law enforcement according to the data of all ministries, which have to carry out the public consultation procedure for legal that they pass.

⁸ Assessment of the quality system of the consultation process carried out based on the 0-8 scale where 0 specifies cases where none of the requirements of the law are respected by ministries and 8 = all requirements of the law are correctly respected.

Graph 6: The number of approved laws that have undergone the process of consultation by ministries



Source: Minister of State for Relations with the Parliament

However, there are still challenges to overcome. Increased use of the Public Notification and Consultation Electronic Registry – PNCER for the public consultation process is one of the main objectives in terms of next steps. Moreover, the establishment of a centralized reporting system, as well as publication of consultation reports, remains still areas to be improved.

In the frame of **Objective 3 “Building of an effective monitoring and evaluation system of strategies, programs and legal framework in force**, based on the following: 1) collection of data through a neutral and transparent process for drafting and implementation of strategies, programs and legislation, and 2) drafting of analysis to evaluate the effects generated by the implementation” implementation of all activities (5) contained in this objective has begun, while one of the activities was fully delivered by the end of 2016.

Monitoring the implementation of strategies is a very important process, which ensures not only increased accountability and enhances accountability for achieving specific measures and targets in each of the government approved strategies, but, above all, it is a process that helps decision makers in terms of a clear reflection of the implementation progress of various sector reforms, timely identification of different problems that can accompany the process of strategies implementation.

The regulatory framework of monitoring and reporting of the strategic framework has been drafted, while it was consulted and discussed:

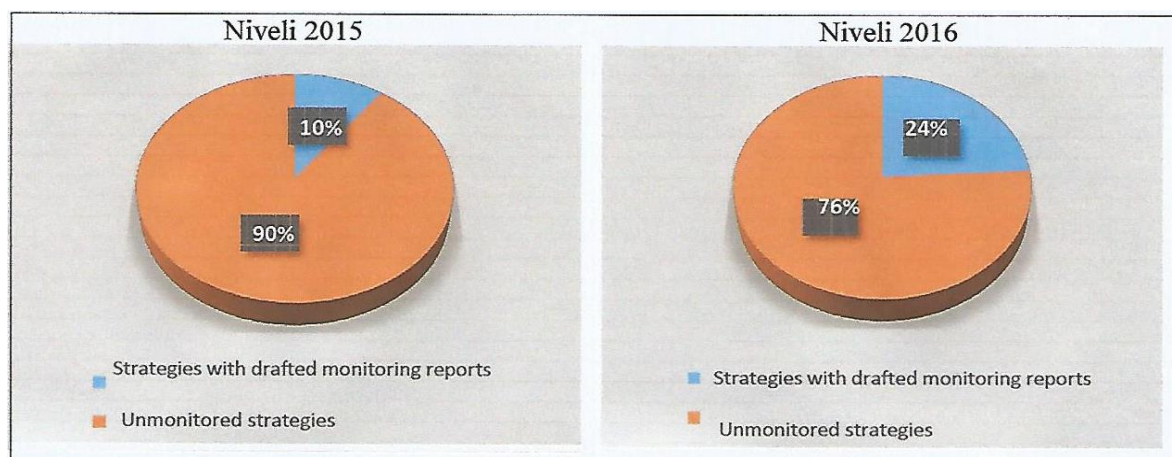
- At the **meeting of the Policymaking Thematic Group (IPMG-PAR)** held in 20 November 2016, with the participation of the Department of Legislation Monitoring, Priorities Delivery Department, Ministry of European Integration, Ministry of Finance, INSTAT, Ministry of Relations with the Parliament, Ministry of Innovation and Public Administration, Ministry of Justice, as well as SIGMA and the EU.
- At the meetings dedicated to **demonstrating IPSIS** that was organized with the ministries and key institutions (Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environment, INSTAT).
- At a dedicated meeting with representatives of **EUD**.

During 2016, there was an increase of efforts to monitor the strategies. Out of 2 monitoring

reports drafted in 2015, the number of strategies monitoring reports reached to 5.

The strategies Monitoring Indicator.

24% of the monitoring reports on important strategies is developed and published in 2016 compared with 10% in 2015.



This consolidated framework envisages that the implementation monitoring process will be based on monitoring the NSDI and sector/crosscutting strategies. The proposing instruments for monitoring strategic framework will include the following:

- NSDI Annual Progress Report drafted by the Strategic Planning Unit.
- Outcome Annual Report of the strategies as drafted by the line ministries.

One of the challenges, which the monitoring process still faces, are the line ministries capacities to ensure a qualitative process of strategies' monitoring, and the capacities to draft reports in the appropriate standards. Limited human capacity of Strategic Planning Office in terms of providing a timely methodological orientation and in terms of reviewing the reports submitted by ministries to ensure that they are drafted according to the appropriate standard, constitute another challenge. Finally, one more challenge, which still remains, is the awareness levels and enhancement of political accountability in terms of achieving the objectives, which have been set out in the strategic documents. Proper informing of the political level, honest and forthright presentation of problems in the course of the implementation of strategies requires a change in the work culture of the Albanian administration: culture analysis and identification of problems in the most objective way possible.

Capacity building for strategic planning and capabilities for operational planning has continued further. ASPA has organized and conducted comprehensive 14-day training on the drafting and implementation of strategies and on the measuring of their impact. Three 14-day training programs (42 days) were conducted during 2016 while 72 civil servants were trained on the strategic framework and 81 civil servants were trained on the Medium Term Budget Program. In the context of improved capacities for the operational work plan, 2-day training on "logical framework of operational planning" was organized and 128 civil servants from line ministries were trained.

Priority activities during 2017:

- The adoption of the legislation and the new methodology of the strategies monitoring

system;

- Finalization of procedures to set the IPSIS System into operation;
- Establishment of a monitoring system of sector strategies, line ministries and the Strategic Planning Unit capacity building to properly carry out the monitoring process.

Main risks and moderating measures

Regarding the implementation of the first priority related to policymaking and legislation in the frame of risks identification, it's noted that the risks may relate to domestic, micro or sector levels. However, there are some risks at central planning level regarding policies and coordination, even of a crosscutting nature, which may have an impact on the activities and expected outcomes.

The identifying risk is associated with limitation of the absorption capacity, particularly in the context of monitoring the strategic framework. In this regard, measures have been foreseen to prevent this identification risk relating to the drafting of the curricula and organization of training in collaboration with the School of Public Administration.

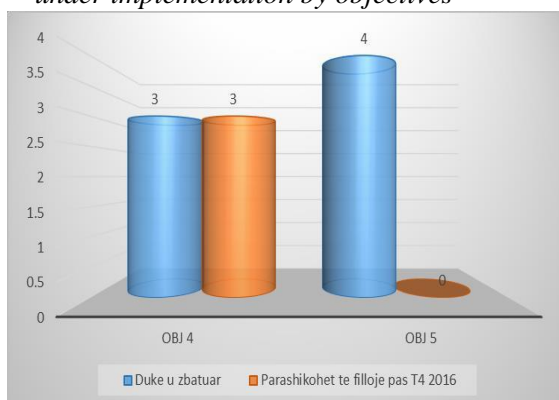
3.1.2. Priority 2: The organization and the functioning of public administration

The aim of the reforms planned in the frame of Priority II is as follows:

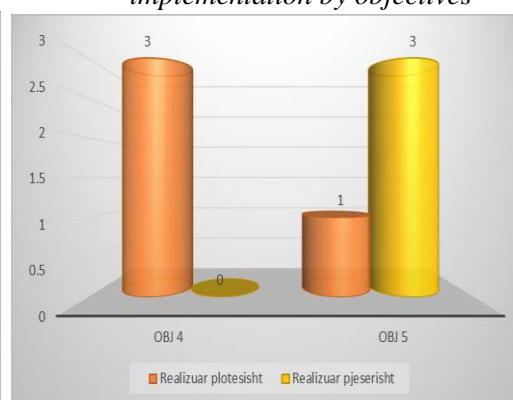
- *Strengthen the public administration set-ups in order to improve service delivery to the public.*
- *Provide public services which are improved, accessible, and integrated by means of reducing opportunities for corruption and strengthening public service delivery ethics.*

This field consists of 10 activities, 7 of which are being implemented and 3 other activities will begin to be implemented in 2017, as shown in Graph 6 below. Out of these 7 activities that have begun implementing, 4 were fully implemented in 2016 (see Chart 7).

Graph 6: Number of sub-activities under implementation by objectives



Graph 7: Status of the sub-activities implementation by objectives



Objective 4 “*Strengthening the structures of public administration in order to improve service delivery to the public*”, has the highest number of fully delivered sub-activities.

- Progress against the activities

Activities planned in the context of Objective 4: *Strengthening the structures of public administration in order to improve service delivery to the public*” consist of total 6 sub-activities, the implementation of 3 of which started and was fully completed in 2016. The implementation of three other sub-activities is planned to start in 2017.

Strengthening of the public administration set-ups in order to improve service delivery to the public is an extremely important goal, which stipulates, first of all, the organization of a study to review the legal framework and functions and internal organization of the administration institutions at the central and local level. Intervention in the set-ups and functions of subordinate institutions and branches of ministries will be made after analyzing the situation and the factors, which influence their activity in the future. Given the importance of activities under this objective, as well as the necessary financial support, the implementation of the activities, for which it has been periodically reported that there is financial gap, has not started.

To identify the funds needed to launch the implementation of the above-mentioned activities, the Department of Public Administration has intensified the work in 2016 to enable the starting of the implementation of IPA Project 2014, which aims at obtaining the necessary financial support. Implementation phases of this project are about to be finalized and the implementation of the project is expected to begin during the second half of 2017.

Meanwhile, the Department of Public Administration has worked **to draft a manual for human resources units (“HR handbook”)**. The second draft of this manual has been already drafted. While it will have to undergo a rigorous examination to ensure the quality and accuracy of the information and, then, it will be sent to all institutions for comments. The draft was written in cooperation with IPA 2012 Twinning Project "Support to civil service reform in Albania".

As part of the territorial reform and Strengthening of new Municipalities, the focus has been to *ensure methodological support for the organization and functioning of the new administrative units in the country and to build implementation capacity*. All municipalities were provided with an organization model, which was designed by type of municipality, within the first quarter of 2016 with the help of UNDP/Star Project. 30 municipalities were assisted in 2016 regarding the application of 4 organization models for the new units as proposed and funded by the Council of Europe. This process, which will assist 20 other municipalities, will continue in 2017. 122 civil servants of local government were trained by the Council of Europe Program in the context of human resource management capacity building.

The 4 activities planned in the frame of *Objective 5: Improved and integrated public services by reducing the corruption opportunities and strengthening a civic based ethic for public service delivery*" started being implemented and good progress was made in 2016.

Progress achieved in 2016 consists in drafting the policy and the legal framework, as well as in the gradual progress towards building the necessary operation infrastructure. The Long-term Citizen-centered Services Delivery Policy Paper was approved upon the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 384 dated 25 May 2016 "On the approval of long-term citizen-centered services delivery policy paper by the state administration in Albania" and Law No. 13, dated 18 February 2016 "On the public service delivery at the front offices

in the Republic of Albania" was also adopted.

The objectives of Long-term Citizen-focused Services Delivery Policy Paper aim at the following:

1. Reduce time and administrative burden on citizens and businesses;
2. Improve access to services and quality of their delivery;
3. Increase the number of citizens satisfied with public services;
4. Reduce corruption, increase efficiency, transparency and accountability of the service delivery.

Five Decisions of the Municipal Councils/Decisions of the Council of Ministers,⁹ which transferred the right of property management to ADISA in the frame of the establishment of ADISA one-stop shops to deliver integrated public services, as well as the Decision of the Council of Ministers approving the organization chart and staffing of ADISA were adopted in 2016 pursuant to the above legislation and in support of delivering activity 5.1.2 on the establishment and operation of one-stop shops.

In November 2016, ADISA established and started the operation of the first Integrated Public Service delivery Centre in Kavaja (the first one-stop shop), where services of five (5) public institutions, namely IPRO, IIHC, SSI, GDCR and NBC, are delivered at the front offices. A total of 206 services, which belong respectively to these institutions, are delivered there.

Several legal acts¹⁰ have been adopted to enable the transfer of the front offices of the above-mentioned institutions to the administration of ADISA. Cooperation agreements with Kavaja Municipality were concluded to provide the services of the National Business Center and GDCR at the front offices of Kavaja Integrated Center.¹¹

⁹ Decision of the Municipal Council No. 10, dated 04 March 2016 "On transferring by Kavaja Municipality to the use of the Minister of State for Innovation and Public Administration of an area of 494 m² on the first floor of the property called "Palace of Culture of Kavaja" located on 'Josif Buda' Boulevard to establish the Integrated Public Service delivery Centre (ADISA); DCM No. 385, dated 25 May 2016 "On transferring the management responsibility from the General Administration of Taxation to the A Integrated Public Service delivery Centre (ADISA) of premises of the property "Building plot with property number 3/703, District no. 1 Kruja and an amendment of Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 818, dated 06 December 2006 "On the approval of the inventory list of state immovable properties, which are to be transferred to the management of the General Directorate of Taxation"; DCM No. 306, dated 04.20.2016 "On transferring the management responsibilities from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Integrated Public Service delivery Centre (ADISA) of the premises of the ground floor of the property with the name "Military servicemen accommodation" in Fier, and an amendment to the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 250, dated 24 April 2003 "On the approval of the inventory list of state immovable properties, are to be transferred to the management responsibility of the Interior Ministry of Public Order", as amended;

DCM No. 680, dated 28 September 2016 "On transferring the management responsibilities from the Ministry of Education and Sports to the Integrated Public Service delivery Centre (ADISA) of the premises of the building with the name "Military servicemen accommodation" in Gjirokastra, and an amendment to the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 435, dated 16 June 2011 "On transferring the management responsibilities from the Ministry of Defense to the Ministry of Education and Science of "Egerem Çabej" University in Gjirokastra, property with no. 600, named "Military servicemen accommodation" in Gjirokastra and an amendment to the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 515, dated 18 July 2003 "On the approval of the inventory list of state immovable properties to be transferred to the management responsibility of the MoD", as amended.

DCM No. 654, dated 14 September 2016 "On approval of the organization chart and staffing of ADISA".

¹⁰ DCM. No. 640, dated 07 September 2016 "On the transfer of the front offices of the Compulsory Healthcare Security Fund to the administration of the Integrated Public Service Delivery Agency ADISA);

DCM No. 757, dated 26 October 2016 "On transferring the front offices of the Local Immovable Property Registration Offices to the administration of the Integrated Public Service Delivery Agency, through which the front offices of IPROs of Kavaja, Kruja, Fieri and Gjirokastra are transferred to ADISA;

- Administrative contract dated 09 November 2016 concluded between ADISA (No. 1274) and Social Insurance Institute (No. 9009), for the transfer of the front offices of the Social Insurance Institute to ADISA;

¹¹ Cooperation Agreement No. 2623/1 dated. 26 September 2016 and Cooperation Agreement No. 1044/1, dated 27 September 2016 between Kavaja and ADISA, respectively, for the transfer of three (3) front offices of the NBC;

- Cooperation Agreement No. 2623/1 dated. 26 September 2016 and Cooperation Agreement No. 1044/1, dated 27 September 2016 between Kavaja and ADISA, respectively, for the transfer of four (4) front offices of the GDCR.

The adoption of the above legal acts directly affects the achievement of the objective of delivering improved, accessible and integrated public services, thus reducing opportunities for corruption and strengthening ethics of the public service delivery. Specifically, the establishment and operation of the first Integrated Public Services Center in Kavaja not only constitutes a milestone in itself, but it achieves also the separation of the service front offices of five institutions (IPRO, IIHC, SSI, GDCR and NBC) from the back offices. Administration of the front offices by ADISA in Kavaja Integrated Center, as well as the front offices by ADISA in Tirana IPRO disengages the contact between citizens and officials responsible for delivering the service, while it ensures the delivery of services at the front offices to the citizens on the basis of a unified model under the standards of customer service and performance monitoring of services delivery at the front office by increasing, *inter alia*, the transparency of the way of public services delivery to citizens at the front office.

Setting new standards about the way of customer service delivery at the front office (both, at the Front Office of ADISA in Tirana IPRO and Kavaja Integrated Center) appears to have significantly improved the management of the queue for obtaining service by reducing it. Citizens' perceptions of the service delivery quality at the Front Office of ADISA in Tirana IPRO and in Kavaja Integrated Center turns out to be positive based on continuous surveys conducted by ADISA for measuring the citizens' opinion. More specifically, citizens say that they receive the right information at the Info-point front offices, they are satisfied with the reception facilities, the respecting of the queue, with the application process and the conduct of employees at the Front Offices of ADISA.

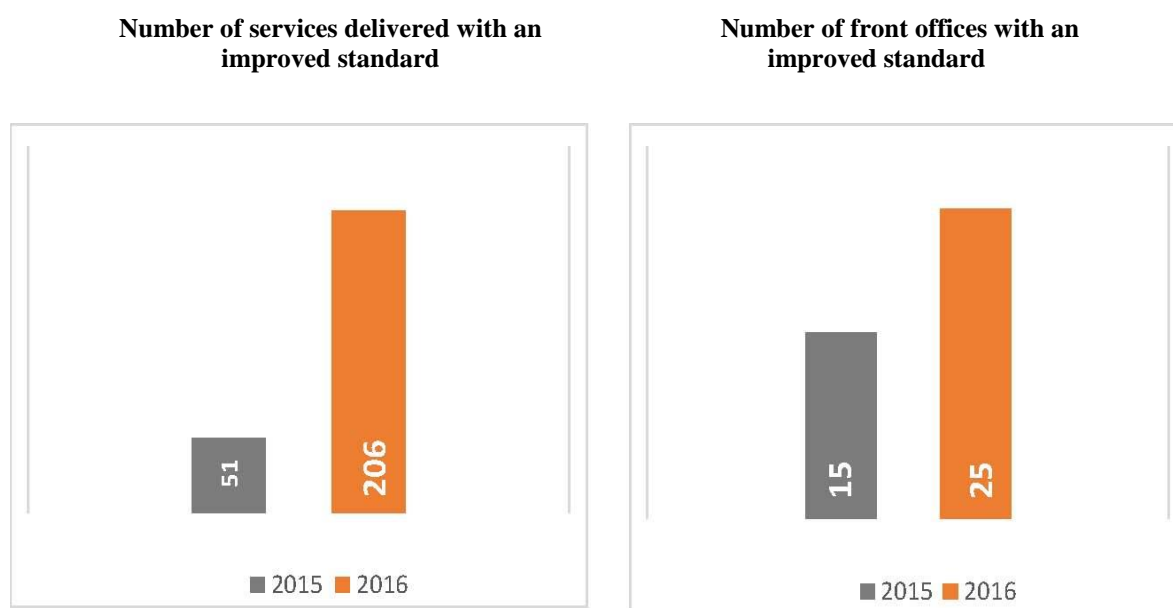
In 2016, ADISA has also continued to work, under the Objective of the Operational Plan of the MIPA for 2016-2017 concerning the establishment of three (3) Integrated Public Services Delivery Centers (Kruja, Gjirokastra, Fier), to establish the Integrated Centers of Kruja, Fier and Gjirokastra, for which the respective procurement procedures have been carried out regarding the reconstruction of buildings. Reconstruction of the building of Kruja Integrated Center has been completed, the opening of which is planned to be carried out in March 2017, while the reconstruction of the buildings of the Integrated Centers of Fier and Gjirokastra is underway.

During March to September 2016 the Feasibility Study of Splitting the Front Offices (FO) from the Back Offices was organized and completed. The Feasibility Study contains an analysis of the current state of services distribution in Albania and sets out several scenarios for a more efficient distribution of ADISA office across the Albanian territory, which will provide information and application opportunities for about 500 public services delivered by 12 public institutions.

Indicator: The number of central government services with improved interaction in the Front Offices

Achievements against the target of 2017¹² were exceeded by 37.3%.

¹² The new target level for 2017 is 150 (referred passport Indicators, p. 15).



In 2015, there were 51 services provided by the improved front offices. This includes the number of Tirana local IPRO services provided by ADISA front offices.

206 services were delivered in 2016 including the following: 52 services of Tirana and Kavaja local IPROs, 1 service of the CHIF, 67 services of SII, 64 services of the NBC and 22 services of the GDCR.

Piloting of the one-stop-shops in local government institutions was completed at the end of 2016 while the project is under tendering for the rest of the municipalities and the extension of the project to the entire territory. The set deadline for the implementation of this project is the fourth quarter of 2017 at a cost of \$ 2 million USD, which is covered by the UNDP/Star Project.

There were 5 one-stop-shops established in local government units up to the end of 2015 (pilot phase). This indicator remained unchanged for 2016. The expansion of the one-stop-shops in the whole territory is expected to be completed in late 2017.

- Next Steps for timely implementation of the activities

- ADISA's restructuring to accommodate the changes that will come as a result of opening / adding/of the Integrated Centers.

- Priority activities during 2017

- Opening of public service delivery front offices in Kruja, Fier and Gjirokastra, and a fourth front office, the location of which is yet to be determined.
- Expansion of one-stop-shops also to municipalities based on the selected model.

Main risks and moderating measures

The challenges faced when meeting the objective of establishing ADISA's Integrated Centers are primarily associated with finding the locations, which are suitable to establish them, as well as the establishment of a monitoring system for the work processes and the way of providing services in them. Addressing of this challenge is linked with the establishment of a

centralized monitoring system for all ADISA Integrated Centers that are planned to be operational.

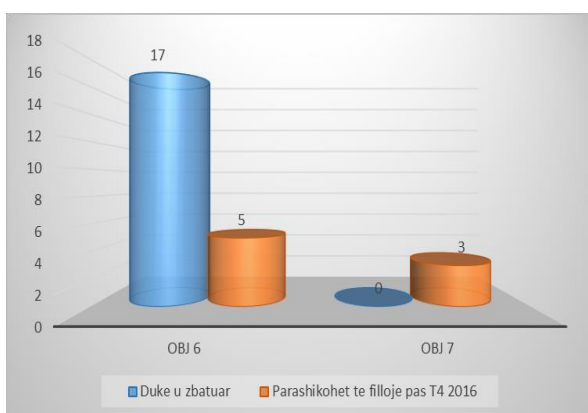
3.1.3. Priority III: Civil service: Human resource management

The aim of the reforms as planned in the frame of Priority II is as follows:

- *Improvement of capacities for the implementation of civil service legislation and facilitated procedures for implementation.*
- *The organization of the payment system in civil service based on job evaluation, the annual achievements of civil servants and mandatory training results.*

As shown in the graphs below, 25 activities are foreseen to be achieved within this priority, of which 17 are being implemented and 8 other activities will begin to be implemented after 2016. Out of 17 activities that had started up to the end of 2016, 9 of them are fully implemented while 8 other activities are partially accomplished.

Graph 9: Number of sub-activities under implementation by objectives



Graph 10: Status of the sub-activities implementation by objectives



- Progress made in terms of activities implementation

Objective 6: Improved capacities for the implementation of civil service legislation and facilitated enforcement procedures has the largest number of activities envisaged in the strategy compared to the other objectives, that is 22 activities, 17 of which began to be implemented in 2015, while 5 others are expected to start in 2017, while five others expected to start in 2017. Among these activities, 9 of them are fully delivered. The following are concrete achievements against overall objectives which aim at improving the capacity to implement civil service legislation.

Important steps have been taken toward improving the quality of services and work in public administration institutions. The Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 1037, dated 16.12.2015 “On the procedures of civil servants evaluation to obtain additional knowledge and update”, provides a detailed description of the process of obtaining and updating of additional knowledge aims to train civil servants and provide them with required additional knowledge according to the functions and the field, in which they operate, in order to raise the quality of services and work in institutions of public administration, part of the civil service. This process will include preliminary testing and,

where necessary, training of civil servants about new knowledge affecting their area.

In 2016, the first two procedures to test the existing civil servants were organized by the Human Resource Management Units and European Integration Network Units. After this experience, which was applied for the first time, the weaknesses and strengths of the implementation approach of this decision were highlighted and several amendments were proposed in order to further improve this important process. Thus, several proposals were prepared to improve the procedure in order to have a well-defined planning and management of the entire process, based on the gained experience.

DoPA's capacities have been further built to strategically lead the civil service reform.

After the functional analysis that was made in connection with the new responsibilities of DoPA in regard to the implementation of legislation civil service, but also in regard to the implementation of Crosscutting Public Administration Reform Strategy 2015-2020, it was necessary to strengthen DoPA's set up by increasing the number of available staff in order to successfully achieve these objectives; more specifically, DoPA's organization chart was expanded with 10 positions, thus bringing the number of DoPA's job positions from 43 in 2015 to 53 in 2016. Additionally, with the entry into force of the law on integrity, DoPA's set-up will include a dedicated unit to manage this process.

In order to further improve the civil service recruitment procedures and to modernize the process, the Department of Public Administration has been working on several fronts.

In order to further enhance the transparency and to strengthen the implementation of mechanisms for the candidates' objective evaluation, the tests for the recruitment procedures organized in 2016 were automatically generated and checked through the electronic system, based on the area of knowledge for each procedure.

Meanwhile, the Department of Public Administration focused in 2016 on further enrichment and improvement of the bank of questions, through which the tests are generated automatically based on the relevant area of knowledge. For this reason, thanks to the support of the Council of Europe, work began on the enrichment of the bank of questions in cooperation with experts of this field. Initially, all questions used in the recruitment procedures organized during 2015 were revised and reworded to comply with the format that the electronic system requires. Experts have prepared the first set of questions for the various disciplines. These questions will have to go through a final filtration to ensure their compliance with the areas of knowledge for the recruitment procedure planned for 2017 to ensure clarity of the wording of questions by avoiding their misinterpretation to the maximum extent, to ensure the updated legal reference, as well as other important element related to their accuracy. Later, all these questions will be added to the existing bank, thus significantly increasing the number of questions for each area and contributing directly to increased transparency and professionalism of the organization of the recruitment procedures.

Indicator: *“The average number of participants in a recruitment procedure for recruitment from outside and from inside (mobility) in the civil service”.*

This indicator is measured through two sub-indicators, respectively:

1: The average number of participants from outside the civil service participating in a recruitment procedure. The indicator for 2016 was 10. We notice a decrease trend for this indicator that was 13.1 in 2015. This indicator is measured by calculating the total number of qualified candidates who have applied for an expert’s position (specialist level) which was 8470 in 2016, while the number of announced vacancies was 858.

2: The average number of participants from inside the civil service participating in a recruitment procedure. The indicator for 2016 was 1.67. We notice an increase trend for this indicator that was 1.3 in 2015. The number of applicants within the civil service, in the three categories, for lateral transfer and promotion was 1428. The number of announced positions, for which there were applications within the civil service system, in the three categories, for lateral transfer and promotion was 857.

Regarding the incorporation of integrity questions into the civil service admission test, the Department of Public Administration in collaboration with the Office of the Minister of State for Local Affairs/National Anti-Corruption Coordinator worked closely during 2016 with the expertise provided through the Twinning Project to find the proper approach and the most convenient way to include these types of questions in the admission tests. In order to ensure the fairest method of checking the answers to these questions, DoPA’s recruitment staff was trained on methods of checking the answers, an element that should be taken into consideration to make a fair evaluation and many other details, which are specific to this area. Initially, the plan is to include such integrity questions in the form of a “pilot” to see the reaction of the candidates to the new approach and make the necessary adjustments.

Incorporation of these types of questions enables testing of elements related to the honesty and integrity of individuals who are employed in the public sector as a prerequisite for the prevention of corruption.

All these measures are intended to ensure impartiality and to ensure a transparent, impartial and meritocratic recruitment process.

The Court granted 1 complaint in 2016 relating to recruitment in the civil service.

In the frame of the commitment regarding the simplification and formatting the steps and processes related to public administration human resources, DoPA is working with the financial support of the European Union on drafting the Terms of Reference for experts to be involved in this process.

Annual turnover (mobility) of management level staff at all levels of the civil service in the institutions of central administration in 2016 was at the range of 5.4%.¹³ The total number of dismissals at management level was 98 while the total number of managerial staff at the beginning of the year was 1812 or, 5.4%. The intention for this indicator is to have a downward trend. Compared to 2015 (6.8%) a downward trend may be observed.

¹³ This indicator is calculated by dividing the number of managerial staff at all levels of civil service in the central administration institutions that are left (or removed) from their positions in one year / divided by the total number of managerial staff in the central administration in a given year.

Group of indicators for monitoring civil service reform and their periodic publication was drafted and published. Efforts were made in 2016 to finalize the indicators with the support of the expertise provided by the IPA Twinning Project 2012. A broad set of indicators, which underwent an evaluation stage to select those indicators that will be included in DoPA's periodic reports, was initially developed. The selected indicators are included in the Annual Report prepared by DoPA and are easily identifiable through a special formatting. Each part of the report contains also the identified indicators along with narrative descriptions and other prepared data. The report and the indicators will be accessible for the public on the official website of the Department of Public Administration in order to increase and improve its transparency.

The work to complete the information and to extend the Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS) into the public administration institutions focused during 2016 on completing the information in terms of organization charts and staffing of all institutions that are part of the civil service, thus making it possible to add into the system over 330 spending units, which are part of the civil service. Information for over 11,000 employees (compared to 6,000 by the end of 2015) has been entered into the system for those spending units. All organization charts and staffing of state administration institutions, which are part of the civil service, are already included in the HRMIS, while work has begun to include local government units and independent institutions.

Progress has been made towards the development of HRMIS including the function of calculating salaries based on their schemes and categories. The HRMIS payroll module will enable not only automatic generation of wages by providing a higher precision of information quality, but it will also directly affect the updating of each employee's file, thus guaranteeing not only a functional electronic system, but also a system that reflects the latest information for each employee.

Department of Public Administration in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance has worked for the unification of the payroll for general government units in order to enable the consolidation of payroll module of the Information System Human Resources Management (HRMIS). Thanks to this cooperation, a joint Instruction between Minister of State for Innovation and Public Administration and the Minister of Finance (Instruction No. 4, dated 13 December 2016) "On the form, elements and completion of the payroll for the general government units "(all public institutions) was signed in December 2016.

Implementation of this solution in the Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS) started based on this document. This will enable the automatic generation of the new form of the payroll.

This implies the use of a unified payroll form, which will be applied by all state institutions. The next step is to use the payroll module through HRMIS by the institutions, something which will enable automatic generation of the payroll for each institution based on the present information in HRMIS.

Based on the joint Instruction, generation of the payroll through the HRMIS will begin to be implemented on a monthly basis to groups of institutions up to the generation of the payroll through HRMIS for all. The training plan for the employees of the finance units of the public administration institutions will be initially attended to enable its implementation, and then the test plan will be followed for the institutions that will generate the payroll through HRMIS.

Concerning staff training about the use the system, training of the representatives of human resources of all central institutions and their subordinates, part of the civil service, has

been completed. Meanwhile, relevant training for local government units was carried out in 2016 and training of independent institutions has started. More than 200 civil servants of human resource sectors were trained during 2016 including independent institutions and local government units, while over 25 training sessions were organized by focusing on organization set-up, staffing and entering of data of the employees' individual files.

Implementation of the 2016 training plan in the frame of the PAR Strategy, which was drafted in accordance with the training needs, is fully accomplished. 726 training days were organized and 4,650 civil servants were trained in 2016 with the state budget funds.

Training curricula as part of *continuous training* are being revised in the frame of the Twinning project. ASPA has drafted the comprehensive programs including "Strategic Planning", "Public Finance Management", "Public Procurement" and it is in the process of drafting a comprehensive program of "Human Resource Management". Training program for senior management was drafted in 2016.

Satisfaction level of training courses participants for the mid-level and senior management level is 70%. The impact of training on the mid-level and senior management level was measured during 2016 and it came out that 70% agree that the training has helped in terms of enhancing the performance.

E-learning platform developed by ASPA has been operating as part of training organization. 745 civil servants have attended, as least, one training module during 2016.

Establishment of the library in the e-library format is in the final stage. ASPA with the support of the DLDP project accomplished the following during 2016:

- Setting standards of the training curricula quality.
- Drafting of the Curricula Quality Assurance methodology.
- Development of the e-library platform.

Evaluation of the training quality is conducted constantly and it has the following indicators in 2016 (in a scale of 1 to 6):

- Average evaluation of training courses 5.37.
- Evaluation of training courses organization 5.56.

One of the qualitative indicators to measure ASPA's achievements is the indicator of customer satisfaction. This is quite an important indicator to evaluate after a period of time how effective the training programs provided by ASPA have been in accordance with the real needs and how much they have helped to enhance the performance of public administration.

This indicator serves to improve training curricula, the possibility of offering innovative methodologies when developing the training and maintain and improve ASPA's image as a center for the development of knowledge and skills.

Meanwhile, the process of the monitoring of the Enforcement of the Law "On the civil servant" continued in 2016. Given the situation found during supervision, as well as the

Box 2: Performance Measurement Methods

Determination of customer satisfaction (in this case public administration) will be achieved through the following:

- Using the participants' reaction measuring forms after the training;
- Using of training impact measuring forms after a period of 6-12 months (*self-evaluation forms*);
- Using forms of training impact measuring forms after a period of 6-12 months (*forms for the direct supervisor*);
- Study and processing individual achievement evaluation forms (*the training part*) of civil servants at work (annually);
- Obtaining of information through the Human Resources Department of each institution;

constant communication with institutions operating in the field of civil service, the Commissioner considers the application of Law No. 152/2012, "*On the civil servant*", as amended, to be at a good level.

The Commissioner assesses the increasing level of work of the Public Administration Department in various aspects of civil service management. Based on the conclusions, which have been drawn during the recruitment process supervision as performed at the Department of Public Administration, the Commissioner concluded that this institution continues to work at higher pace in order to place the process on regular procedural framework. Even during this year, competitions continued to be organized as pool, something which ensures a considerable number of candidates and a satisfactory quality threshold of participants in the process.

During this year, increasing trends of the level of implementation of the institute of pool recruitment may be found in local administration institutions and independent institutions, which were problematic in this regard a year ago.

Civil Service Supervision Commissioner (CSSC) supervised **40** institutions, of which **33** belong to the state administration (**2** ministries and **31** subordinate institutions) and **7** local government units (including **7** municipalities and **43** administrative units (former communes), which are attached to the municipalities under the new administrative division of the territory), which include a total of **2.233** positions as part of the civil service.

26 supervision/inspection procedures, **22** of which belong to the state administration and **4** to local government units (municipalities) ended with a warning decision to remedy the legality of the civil service administration, where the Commissioner has presented recommendations for legal corrections, which have to be undertaken by supervised institutions in regard to the civil service administration:

- Cancellation (revocation) of administrative acts was requested in **300 cases** appointments, which had been made against the law (temporary contract or appointment act);
- Cancellation (revocation), amendment or the issuance of administrative acts for the declaration of the employment status was requested in **483 cases**.

In the meantime, there are **14** general supervision/inspection procedures in process, of which **11** belong to the state administration (Agriculture Directorates of Berat, Fier, Durrës, Elbasan, Lushnja and Prefects of Berat, Dibra, Fier, Gjirokastra, Elbasan, and VURI), and **3** local government units (Municipalities of Elbasan, Shkodra and Puka).

1. **90** reports/complaints were submitted, of which **56** belong to the state administration, **32** to local government units and **2** to independent institutions.
2. The supervisions/inspection process is completed for **89** civil service admission procedure at the expert level in the Department of Public Administration.
3. Further treatment of processes initiated in 2016 will continue also during 2017, in addition to the planned supervisions/inspections as set out in the Annual Work Plan 2017.

One of the most important objectives of the civil service reform and the Strategy itself is the *Organization of the civil service wage system based on job evaluation, on the evaluation of annual achievements of civil servants and on compulsory training outcomes (Objective 7).*

In order to achieve the envisaged measures for this objective, work is continuing to finalize

the terms of reference in order to complete the necessary steps for the launch of the IPA 2014 project implementation.

The two indicators related to wage policies remained unchanged in 2015:

Wage ratio between maximum and minimum wage in 2015 remains unchanged at 11.7%.

Changes to the scheme and the number of positions of the salary scheme based on the content of the job description = 0

Both above indicators are related to fulfillment of three activities listed above.

- The next steps for the timely implementation of activities

The following next steps are recommended in order to implement the following in a timely manner:

- Reviewing of the plan of activities, which are set to be implemented during 2018-2020, taking into consideration the financial needs for the implementation of the strategy for the next three years in order to determine activities with real and feasible deadlines;
- Finalization of the processes necessary to enable the implementation of the IPA 2014 project, thus aiming at launching the implementation of the activities set out in it;
- Continuous interagency cooperation as a key element for the development and delivery of activities;
- Regular reporting and monitoring of the progress of activities aimed at timely identification of potential challenges or obstacles that may affect the implementation by the set timeline.

- Priority activities of 2017

- ✓ *Increasing the quality of the recruitment process in the civil service through the following:*
 - Improvement of the vacancies planning process and fulfillment of the recruitment needs by means of making a better grouping of the expert positions category;
 - Transformation of the official site of DoPA in a portal for all public administration, where the information is easy to access and easy to understand for everyone, no matter whether they are citizens, civil servants or potential candidates;
 - Improvement, enrichment and updating of the content of the bank of questions under the requirements of the recruitment process;
 - Application of questions that evaluate the candidates' integrity by means of making part of the selection process the testing of elements related to the fairness and integrity of individuals who are employed in the public sector as a prerequisite for the prevention of corruption;
 - Training of the members of the Standing Admission Committees on the methodology and best techniques of evaluation;
 - Cooperation with higher education institutions in order to inform potential applicants (students and graduates) with respect to employment opportunities in

the state administration, etc.;

- Drafting of a set of guidance materials to assist all potential candidates (video tutorial on how to apply, the explanatory document on frequently asked questions);
- ***Capacity building of DoPA and human resources units of state administration institutions;***
- **Performance evaluation of the of civil servants, as well as of the existing capacities** by setting clear objectives and a set of indicators to measure them, focusing on continuous training of officials responsible for carrying out this process;
- **Further development of innovative methods** to improve and facilitate communication and interaction between public institutions and citizens;
- ***Development and operation of the Central Personnel Registry (HRMIS). Expanding the interaction of the HRMIS system with other important state databases and systems and*** further extension of the Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS) across all institutions of state administration, independent institutions and local government units. Implementation of the payroll module through the HRMIS for, at least, 30% of the state administration institutions part of the civil service;
- ***Continuous strengthening of ASPA as a provider of training for the civil service.*** Increasing the quality of training provided, and the development of a training methodology with innovative approach through e-learning and e-training platforms.

Challenges for 2017

Besides the achievements of the capacity building to implement civil service legislation and facilitated implementation procedures, the focus during 2017 will be to continue the implementation of reforms in this area in order to further improve all the human resource management processes:

- Implementation of the measures contained in the Action Plan for 2015-2017, its reviewing it in accordance with current experience and planning of concrete and achievable activities. Financial needs assessment for the implementation of the strategy as guided in the frame of the Medium Term Budget Program.
- Launching of the implementation of IPA 2014 Project, by means of which it's intended to accomplish several important activities, for which there has been a financial gap that has affected their implementation.

3.1.4. Priority IV - Administrative procedures and oversight

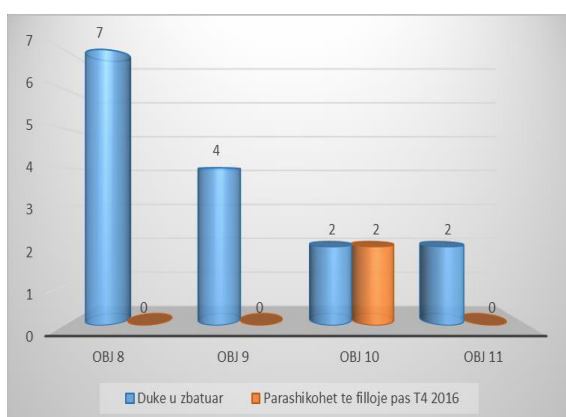
The reforms envisaged under the priority "**Administrative procedures and oversight**" will be directed towards achieving the following four objectives:

- *Implementation of simplified procedures for providing services, facilitating communication with the public and avoid corruption.*
- *Developing an ICT infrastructure capable of supporting the daily activities of the public administration and increase efficiency by reducing the time to access, process and transmit information and improve the flow of information.*
- *Increase the efficiency and accountability of public officials.*

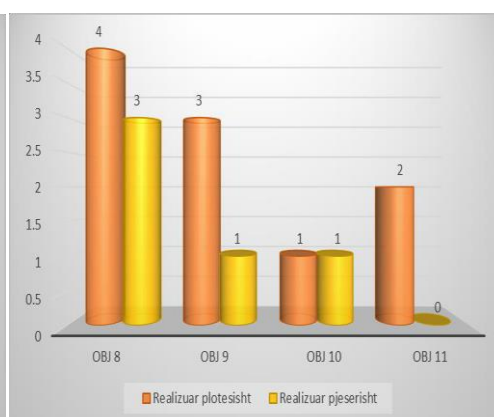
- Increased control over the activity of public administration, guaranteeing the rights of citizens and access to information.

This column contains 17 activities, of which 15 have begun to be implemented. Compared with other priorities, this priority has the highest number of activities that are being implemented compared to the three other priority pillars. Out of the activities that were under implementation, 10 were fully delivered at the end of 2016.

Graph 11: Number of activities under implementation



Graph 12: Status of the activities



- Progress against the activities

A total of 7 activities is foreseen in the frame of **Objective 8: “Simplified procedure for the provision of services by facilitating communication with the public and avoiding corruption”**. Their implementation started in 2016. 4 out of these 7 activities have been fully implemented.

The reengineering project contract was signed in January 2016 including reengineering the aspect of the public services procedures delivery, the legal and IT one, by 10¹⁴ central institutions in the country in the focus of the project.

Institution	Number of services
Construction Technical Central Archive	5
National Business Center (National Licensing Centre + National Registration Centre)	169
Immovable Property Registration Office	52
Territorial Development Agency	12
Social Security Institute	67
General Directorate of Road Transport Services	64
Directorate General Maritime	18
Compulsory Health Insurance Fund	1
General Directorate of Civil Registry	22
Ministry of Education and Sport	11

¹⁴ Initially object reengineering were 11 institutions. Because of the merger in a long in national BACs 2016 establishing institutions found to be 10.

A comprehensive methodology has been developed for the implementation of the reengineering process, which will lead ADISA in future projects to improve the processes of public services. This methodology was adopted at the meeting of the Public Services Inter-Ministerial Committee that was held on 8 November 2016.

The validation process of obtaining services through "Baseline/AS-IS" mapping for institutions at the focus has been completed. ADISA's team responsible for the reengineering has been also trained, in addition to ADISA's legal sector experts, the services sector, and the standards and complaints sector. Moreover, technical working groups at 10 institutions at focus were trained during this period on the reengineering techniques.

Work to prepare the to-be maps for the work processes for obtaining the services continued during 2016. ADISA, in the capacity of the authority responsible for drawing up the models¹⁵ has also simplified the way of obtaining information about benefiting the public services by preparing a unique model of public services Information Card and by drafting 481 Information Card for the services 18 (eighteen) state administration institutions.¹⁶

Among them, 420 Information Cards were validated by 10 (ten) of the aforementioned institutions,¹⁷ thus determining the manner of obtaining public services delivered by them and the necessary documentation for their own benefit, while 61 other Information Cards were sent to 8 relevant institutions¹⁸ for validation.

420 validated Information Cards have been also added to the public service database, which is administered by ADISA. ADISA in association with the NAIS has also standardized the way of receiving information about benefiting of public services in the government e-Albania platform by making available to NAIS the validated Information Cards for 420 services.

As of October 2016, the citizens get informed on the basis of 420 Information Cards about the manner of benefiting 420 services of 10 institutions (as above) through ADISA Call Center, which runs from Monday to Saturday from 8:00 am to 21:00 pm. 2257 citizens were informed through the Call Center during October-December 2016, whereas the institutions with the highest number of request were are as follows:

- ✓ **Immovable Property registration Office;**
- ✓ *General Directorate of Road Transport;*
- ✓ *General Directorate of Civil Registry.*

Services for which most information is required on the other hand are:

- 1. Application for biometric passport (GDCR);**
- 2. Driving license renewal (GDRT);**
- 3. Revaluation of immovable property (IPRO).**

Drafting and validation of 420 Information Cards in question has not only meet the need of informing citizens about the manner of how to benefit public services as delivered by 10 institutions in the initial focus, but it has also contributed to increased citizens' security regarding the collection and presentation of the documentation necessary for benefiting the requested service. Validation of Information Cards excludes, at the same time, the possibility

¹⁵ Based on DCM. 343 dated 05.04.2016 "On the determination of the Responsible Authority to design models".

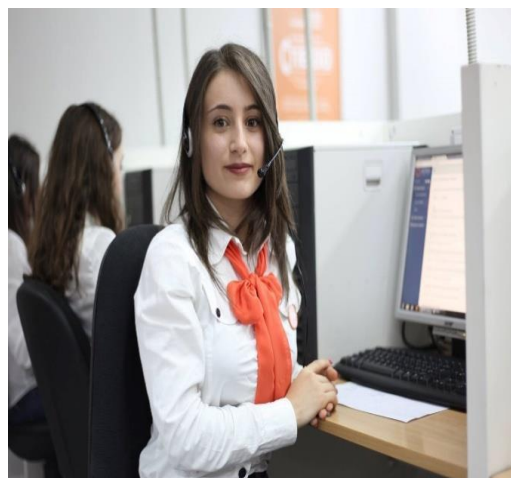
¹⁶ AQTN, AZHT, DPD, GDCR, DPSHTR, IIHC, SSI, BACs, MAS, IPRO, ATP, AKP, DPP, DPB, HSS, ALUIZNI, ABSA and DPT,

¹⁷ By AQTN, AZHT, DPD, GDCR, GDRTS, IIHC, SSI, BACs, MAS, IPRO.

¹⁸ ATP, AKP, DPP, GDP, HSS, ALUIZNI, ABSA and DPT, respectively.

of adding, changing or reducing the formal criteria for benefitting the service (required documentation) by the institution responsible for providing the service. This translates into preventing any possibility of abuse by the institution responsible for providing services to citizens service in regard to changing the criteria set for providing the service and it avoids, at the same time, failure to provide the service by the responsible institution or to exceed the deadlines of its delivery based on the justification of failing to meet other formal or new criterion/criteria of benefiting the service, which are often defined *ad hoc* by the responsible institution.

The following is a picture of a Call Center:



Consequently, citizen's clarity and security has increased as regards the manner of benefiting a service on the basis of clear, transparent and exhaustive criteria for benefiting public services, as defined in the relevant Information Card, while multiple channels are made available to citizens to get informed about the ways how to benefit public services (either in ADISA's front offices or those of the respective institutions, ADISA's Integrated Centers, in e-Albania portal or in ADISA Call-Center).

Indicator 8.a: Number of services with simplified delivery procedures

Note: The drafting and adoption of services with simplified procedures is under way within reengineering.

Indicator 8.b: Level (%) of public satisfaction towards the quality of service delivery

In order to measure the level of satisfaction with public services, citizens were surveyed over the past 12 months about their experience when receiving public services. Respondents were asked if they had needed to obtain a public service or to have access to such services in 16 institutions in focus¹⁹ in order to measure the satisfaction level. Respondents, who admitted accessing the service in one of the 16 institutions, were further asked to provide

¹⁹ The number of institutions in the focus of the measuring of the satisfaction level is 16, except the merger of NRC and NLC (the establishment of the NBC), because respondents were asked separately for each of these two institutions.

their evaluation about receiving the requested service.²⁰

The findings of the study are presented in percentage for the entire sample and disaggregated by gender, age, educational level, employment, income level and ethnic group affiliation.

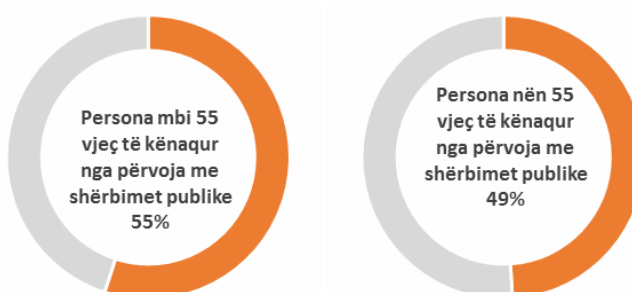
Almost half of respondents (51%), who have approached the central government institutions, have stated that they are "somewhat satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the entire service process experience.



There are more women satisfied with the experience related to public services than men (57% to 47% respectively).

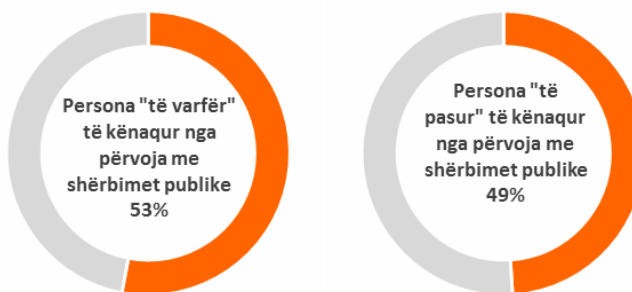


In addition, older people say they are more satisfied with public services than younger people (57% of respondents over 55 years old are satisfied, compared with 49% of respondents under 55 years old).



Divided by "wealth index", about 53% of the "poor" say they are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" compared with 49% of the "rich" who declare the same.

²⁰ Calculation of indicators: Percentage of respondents who had asked to obtain a public service over the past 12 months, and who declared that they are "somewhat satisfied" or "satisfied" with the service they had received from the institutions, with which they had contacted. Population sample was 2,000 interviews with people aged over 18 years. The survey was conducted through face-to-face interview, during March-April 2016.



Even in the case of the Roma, the percentage of those who are satisfied with the public services is 52% of those who have contacted, at least one, institution in the last 12 years: this percentage is approximate to finding of the general population.



There is no difference in the level of satisfaction among respondents from urban and rural areas: these two categories mark the level of 51%.



When disaggregated by level of education, the percentage of the level of satisfaction is 44% among those with university and postgraduate education, 54% among those with secondary school education and 52% among those with elementary school education.



Indicator baseline "Number of central government services to improve interoperability at the reception offices" related to Goal 8 "simplified procedure for providing services, facilitating communication with the public and avoid corruption" has not been determined for 2015. The actual level of this indicator for 2016 is 0, because consultancy outputs for reengineering

public services of 10 institutions in focus haven't been approved yet by the institutions concerned. Accordingly, there is no progress marked.

Achievements against the target for 2017²¹ are, therefore, at 0% level.

This indicator was measured for the first time in 2016 regarding the "*Level (%) of public satisfaction towards the quality of service delivery*".

The 2016 baseline for this indicator is the 2016 indicator with 51%, therefore having a growing trend for this indicator.

ICT Infrastructure Development is considered an important element not only to increase the efficiency of the work of public administration, but also to improve the flow of information and broadcasting. In order to achieve this objective, the project of Electronic Record and Document Management System (EDRMS) was introduced by conveying a clear vision in terms of increasing efficiency and effectiveness inside the Albanian Government. This platform has a direct impact on the reduction of administrative barriers, therefore leading to a high performance of the public administration activity. The ERDMS project was piloted for the first time in the Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Transport. Changes were made during 2016 to improve workflow of the system by the Legislation and Programs Monitoring Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister. Ministries' IT specialists in the role of administrator, protocol and user were trained on 1-2, 8-9, 15-16, 22-23 December.

Risk related to the proper operation of the ERDMS system by the public administration is the lack of training of IT workers in line ministries, depending on the functions they exercise, which are related to documentation management system ERDMS, thus resulting in difficulties when using the system. Steps, which aim at delivering this activity, include organization of training and assistance from the IT staff of their respective institutions during the first procedures of using the ERDMS system.

The way of providing services to citizens and businesses has been totally re-dimensioned in the government unique portal in order to implement the initiatives. Three years ago, only 14 electronic services were delivered in the government unique portal e-Albania.

The completely redesigned version of the government unique portal **e-Albania** was introduced in May 2015. The portal is designed in a simpler, easier and more practical form and it's also adapted for phones, for Android and iOS, where the Albanian citizens, businesses and civil servants at the central level can use all the services and functionalities of the portal. Interventions carried out by NAIS in order to facilitate the use of the government unique portal e-Albania for Albanian citizens, businesses and public officials has resulted in an increased use of this portal in a sustainable way.

The government unique portal **e-Albania** was enriched during 2016 with **217 new electronic services** of Level 3 and 4 under UNPAN 2014 classification, thus reaching a **total of 465 electronic services**. This figure marks an increase of 33 times compared with 2013 and almost a double increase compared with 2015. The portal registered 71,703 new users (4% of businesses and 96% citizens), thus bringing the total number of users to 621. Total 241 registered users who have received assistance for 2016 is **5,466**. Digitalization of over 100 services of the public administration is planned for 2017.

²¹ The new target for 2017 is 150 (referred to Indicators Passport, p. 24).

Electronic services delivered by categories:

- Business – 146
- Government official - 4
- Citizen – 226
- Citizen/Business - 86
- Citizen/Business /Government Official – 3

5 other institutions were linked in 2016 to the Government Interoperability Platform to exchange data in real time by increasing the total number of institutions connected to 42 or 7 times higher than that in 2013. This connection enables communication and data exchange between different institutions by creating the possibility of providing more electronic services for citizens, businesses and the government itself.

The number of transactions in Government Interoperability Platform in 2016 was around **25.57 million Albanian Leks**:

- About 37.43 times higher than the number of transactions carried out throughout 2013 (683 207 transactions during the year);
- 8.86 times higher than the number of transactions carried out throughout 2014 (which is about 2.88 million Albanian Leks);
- 2.24 times higher than the number of transactions carried out throughout 2015 (which is around 11:42 million Albanian Leks).

Another initiative to facilitate the access of citizens and businesses to the electronic services delivered by the government unique portal e-Albania was undertaken in 2015. In this context, the distribution of 15 digital front offices of e-Albania was successfully completed in 2016 to the most important cities of Albania including Tirana Municipality, Shkodra Municipality, Korça Municipality, Vlora Municipality, Malësi e Madhe Municipality, Elbasan Municipality, Elkos Trading Center Fier, ADISA Tirana (Front Offices of the Immovable Property Registration Office), GDRTS Tirana, Tirana NBC, IIHC Tirana, Saranda Municipality, Flagship Center Durrës, ADISA Fier (to be delivered at the time of opening of the center), ADISA Kavaja.

A new initiative, which was undertaken in 2016 to increase public participation in decision-making and legislative process, was the implementation of a system of public notification and consultation. This system generates a final draft act, which contains the initial draft act together with all suggestions (selected by the moderators to be reflected), as well as with additional reporting data such as users' voting in polls. In this context, Public Consultation and Notification Electronic Register was established in 2016 and it was integrated into the e-Albania portal using FPSTS portal technology for Single Sign-on (SSO).

In the context of the development of ICT infrastructure for businesses and citizens, NAIS implemented a project for the Centralized Multifunction System for building permits, which became operational in 2016. This system has enabled the digitization of the entire work process of the institutions involved in the treatment of permits, and it has provided the citizens and businesses with the opportunity to benefit this service online via e-Albania portal. As of September 01 until today, over 1500 applications were submitted, while the service is used by citizens and businesses over 25,000 times. 1,155 users currently access the system (public administration employees) from all the institutions involved in the handling of applications of building permits.

Application of online services for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is another project implemented in 2016. Its aim is to develop ICT infrastructure and to digitize 36 services delivered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomatic and consular missions in the services government unique portal e-albania.al. Using of the new system of applications combats the corruption phenomena right at its source, because the relation between the applicant and service providers goes through a process that inevitably leaves traces. Implementation of online services for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ended successfully in 2016 by achieving the publication of 36 electronic services on the government portal e-Albania in November and December 2016, adjustment of the websites of each consulate with the following elements: virtual clicks, 3D virtual tour for each consulate and visitor guidance to pages of the service package. Electronic services are already active through e-Albania portal and they provide optimal response to increasingly greater demands addressed to the Albanian consular offices.

The project of the queue management system for advanced medical examination, which is administered by the Ministry of Health and, which enables citizens to book advanced medical examinations online, was executed during 2016. 34 electronic services that enable the next booking for advanced medical examinations, online consultation of the recommendations made by the doctors and the possibility of loading a scanned recommendation to carry out the next booking based on this recommendation (when the recommendation is not uploaded by the doctor) was published in e-Albania portal in December.

Risks and protection measures

The risk, which is related to the implementation of online services, has to do with the timely and precise treatment of the citizens' applications for the 36 electronic services of the MFA, which are submitted through the government portal e-Albania. Training of consuls, ambassadors or responsible persons (located in dozens of countries around the world where the Albanian state has its embassies) who will handle applications is about to be completed. The training process is under continuous oversight and it's continuously providing support to all actors involved in issues, which may be encountered during the processing of applications.

Another risk related to this project is the training of all actors involved in the system, such as doctors who upload recommendations and patient's data or interpretation of the results of the examination, persons authorized to modify or seek the change of the system variables (e.g., reflection in real time into the system of medical devices that are out of order, etc.).

Interaction of all stakeholders is essential to the full functioning of the system in support of citizens, as well as in support of medical service.

4 activities, 2 of which began to be implemented in 2016, were foreseen in the frame of *Objective 10: Enhancement of the efficiency and accountability of public officials*. 1 out of these 2 activities, for which implementation started, 1 is fully accomplished.

Meanwhile, the New Code of Administrative Procedure provides a new approach, and therefore training of public employees takes a particular importance in this context in order to familiarize them with the new procedures in terms of implementation of the Code.

During 2016, the Department of Public Administration together with the Twinning Project IPA 2012, undertook in the frame of the implementation of the new Code of Administrative Procedure, as part of Component 2 of this project, a series of activities aimed at raising

awareness about new things that new code will bring and extensive familiarization with it and the organization of several training sessions, more specifically:

Awareness and visibility on the New Code of Administrative Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Raising awareness about innovations in the new administrative procedures, organized for various stakeholders - 254 participants from central administration institutions, subordinate institutions, judges, lawyers, of representatives of universities, etc. ✓ 3 explanatory documents on the provisions of the new Code of Administrative Procedures in order to explain them in the simplest way to the citizens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Ways to challenge a decision;</i> ○ <i>Citizens' rights;</i> ○ <i>Deadlines</i>
Training session on the new Code of Administrative Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Training session on the implementation of the new Code of Administrative Procedures: 391 participants; 57 – School of Magistrates (administrative judges and students); 334 – civil servants trained together with ASPA (general secretaries, general managers, department directors, human resource specialists, legal specialists from the central administration institutions, subordinate and independent institutions) ✓ <i>Workshop on "administrative silence"</i>

Significant progress was made during 2016 in regard to the implementation of activities related to the strengthening of the regime of declaration and audit of assets of public officials, cases of conflict of interest, and protection of the rights of whistleblowers in cases of declaration of abusive actions or corruption. Law No. 60/2016 "On the signaling and protection of whistleblowers" (published in the Official Journal No. 115, dated 23 June 2016) was adopted in June 2016. Legal effects of this law extend as of 01 October 2016 with the exception of obligation for internal signaling for private entities, the application of which will start by 01 July 2017.

Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 816, dated 16 November 2016 "*On the structure, selection criteria and the labor relations of the employees of the responsible unit in the public authorities*" (published in the Official Journal No. 229, dated 25 November 2016) was adopted pursuant to the abovementioned law. Under this Decision, all the public authorities with more than 80 employees notify HIDAACI for the establishment of the unit.

The HIDAACI also adopted an instruction and two regulations pursuant to the abovementioned law that will set out the structures and methods of administrative investigation of signals.²² This is a mechanism to prevent corruption, which is recognized by the best practices in the world.

Given that Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 816, dated 16 November 2016 was adopted later than expected, no training of civil servants were conducted in 2016. This measure is planned to be achieved by the first 6 months of 2017.

Upon the adoption of the law on the right to information, a special importance is also given

²² 1 - Instruction No. 1, dated 23 September 2016 "On the approval/defining the structure, selection criteria and training of employees in the responsible unit of the private entities".

2 - Regulation No. 2, September 2016 "On administrative investigation of the request whistleblower for protection from retaliation to the HIDAACI".

3 - Regulation No. 3, September 2016 "On administrative investigation of the request whistleblower for protection from retaliation to the HIDAACI".

to **Objective 11: Growth of control over the activity of public administration, guaranteeing the rights of citizens and access to information.**

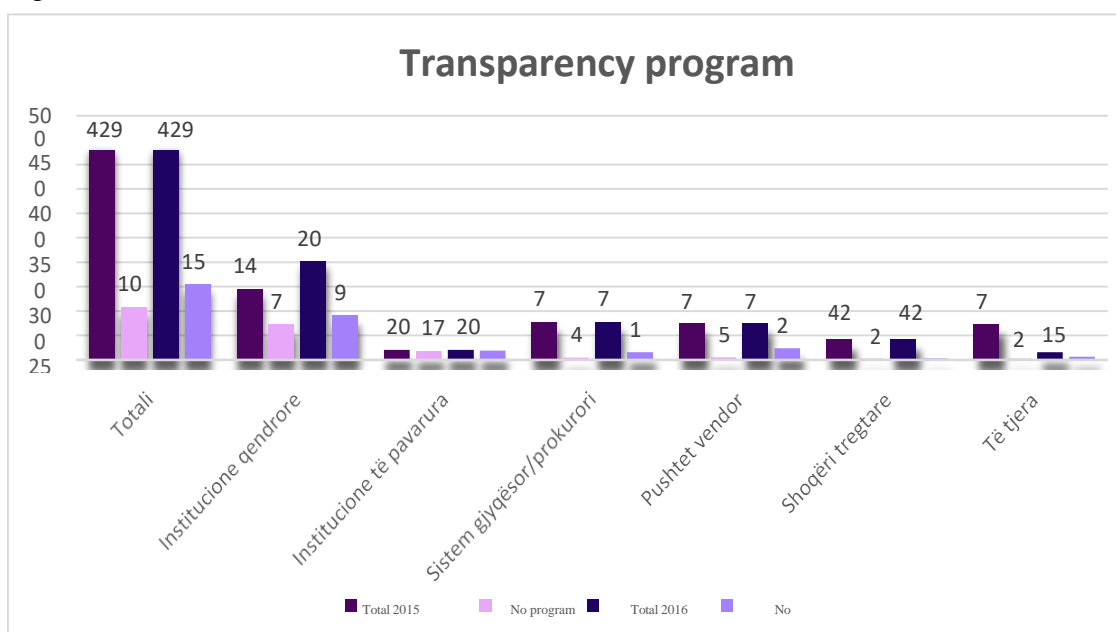
During 2016, the Office of the Commissioner has continued to monitor the implementation of Law 119/2014 "On the right to information". The number of complaints filed with the Commissioner's Office has reached to 684, of which 547 were resolved through mediation, while the Commissioner made a decision about 36 complaints, 65 resulted to be out of scope, 7 were filed after the expiry of the deadline and 29 were incomplete.

95 inspections were carried out during 2016 with a view to verifying complaints submitted. The Commissioner for the Right to Information made three decisions by imposing administrative sanctions against the persons who were liable for failing to make available the required information.

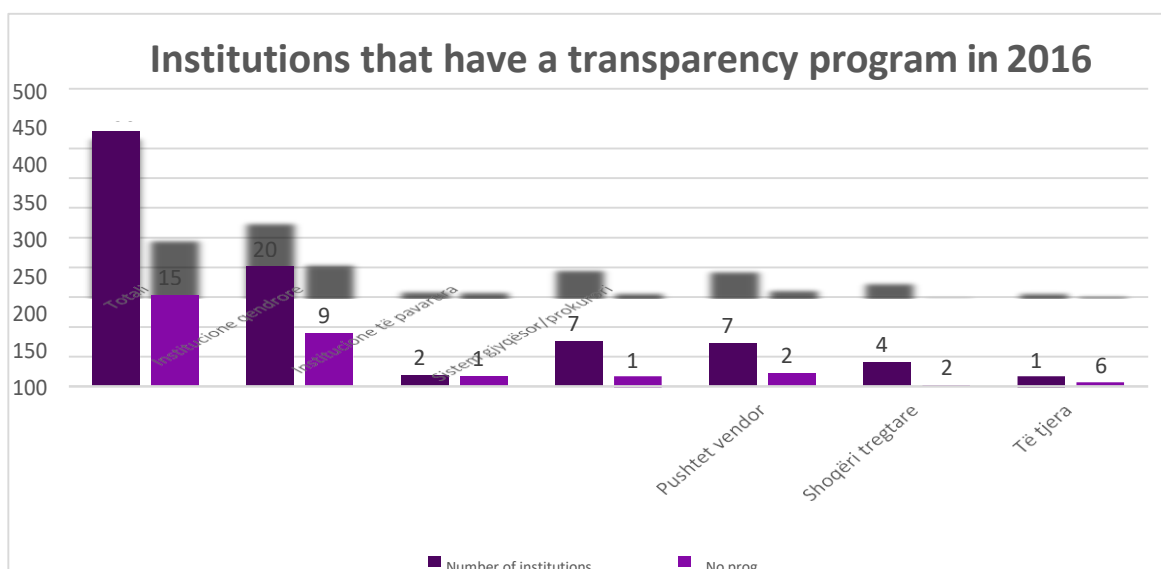
Index of sanction imposed in 2016 is 0.03.

Drafting and adoption of transparency programs by the public authorities remains problematic, although there are a growing number of institutions that have fulfilled this obligation.

It should be noted that during this year the Office of the Commissioner has worked to revise the Public Authorities database and it's exactly for this reason that it has drafted a guideline with the assistance of SIGMA experts for the Public Authorities operation. Therefore, the following chart shows a change of the number of some categories of public authorities, such as, for example, in 2015 there were 145 institutions that belonged to the central institutions category while in 2016, after reviewing the institutions database, there are 202 institutions, which are included in this category. We hereby explain that these institutions in 2015 were part of the **Other** category, therefore the number of institutions in this category has also changed.



The above chart shows that there are 46 more institutions that have drafted transparency programs this year.



To raise the level of awareness of citizens, but also to increase the level of knowledge of public administration employees, the Office of the Commissioner continued with training in the districts (4 trainings were conducted in the Districts of Berat, Elbasan, Kukës and Gjirokastra), in addition to training at the Albanian School of Public Administration. 10 training activities attended by 335 civil servants on probation in the line ministries and subordinate institutions were organized during 2016. In addition, training was organized for 35 civil servants of HIDAACI.

To fulfill the objectives set out in the Crosscutting Public Administration Reform Strategy, the Office of the Commissioner has only used its internal financial and human resources.

There were 684 complaints filed with the Commissioner for Freedom of Information in 2016, which were resolved in citizen's favor.²³

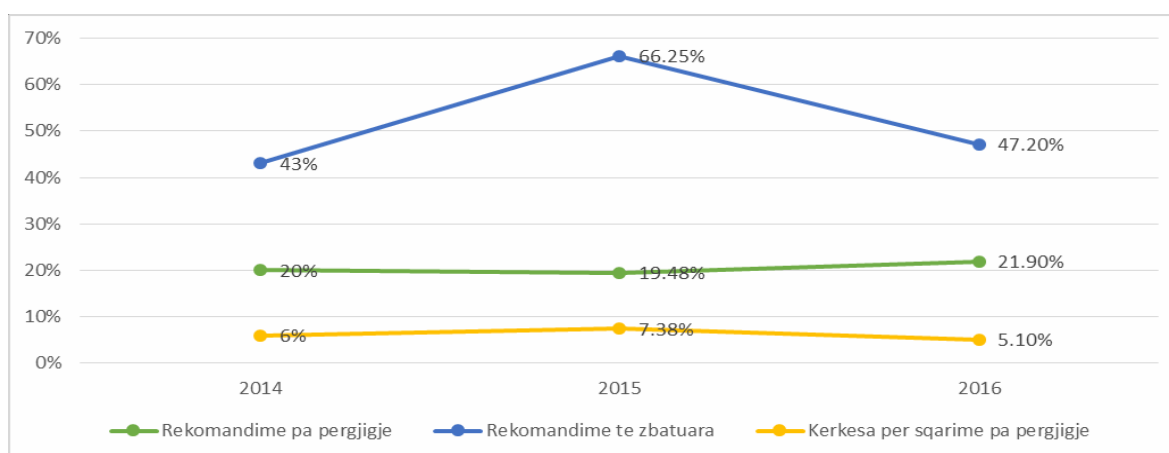
95 inspections were conducted during 2016 at the Public Authorities with the purpose of verifying the submitted complaints.

Index of sanctions imposed in 2016 vis-à-vis the inspections is 0.03

Timely response by public institutions to the requests of the Ombudsman remains still a concern. In 2016, the institution of the Ombudsman has addressed a total of 319 recommendations to public administration institutions including the central and local ones.

Indicator of the Implementation of the Ombudsman's Recommendations

²³ The number of complaints was described as a right is calculated by subtracting from the total number of complaints (274) the number of complaints outside the scope of the law 119/2014 (19), the number of incomplete complaint (5) and the number of complaints out of time.



Of the total number of addressed recommendations, 197 recommendations were accepted, where it turns out that only 93 of the accepted recommendations have been fully implemented. So, when referring to the proportion of accepted recommendations against the implemented recommendations, it comes out that 47.2% of accepted recommendations have been implemented by the respective institutions.

Regarding recommendations without a response, it should be highlighted that 70 recommendations were without response in 2016. So, according to the proportion between recommendations without a response and the total recommendations as addressed by the Ombudsman, it comes out that 21.9% of the addressed recommendations have no response.

Regarding the number of requests for information, it results that Ombudsman's Office has sent in 2016 to the institution a total of 3053 requests for information, 158 of which didn't receive a response, or 5.1% of the requests as addressed for information failed to receive a response from the relevant institutions.

At the conclusion of the above statistics, the outcome is that during 2015-2016, as it may be noticed, there was an increase of the number of recommendations accepted in general by the public administration, but there is a decrease of the percentage of implemented recommendations. While concerning the recommendations without a response, it turns out that there were more recommendations without a response in 2016 compared with 2015.

Main risks and the protection measures

One of the possible risks that will affect the implementation of the objectives and indicators is the lack of funds foreseen for the full accomplishment of the public administration functions. Although the number of staff dealing with complaints review about the right to information increased by 2.5 times, still there is lack of staff who deal with drafting, implementation and monitoring of transparency program.

- Priority activities for 2016 2017

- Adding of 115 electronic services from the contract "Adding of 209 new electronic services to the e-Albania portal", which is currently under implementation. It is expected that the number of e-services will reach to over 580 within the year.
- Adding of 5 other institutions to the Government Interoperation Platform, thus reaching total 47.

4. Main challenges of the strategy implementation in 2017

The main challenge, which the implementation of the strategy could face in 2017, will be the influence that the *process of parliamentary elections* may have on the decision-making and efficiency of public administration. Normal operation of the administration may be directly or indirectly affected by impacts that may arise as a result of the political situation in the country. The government will take measures to minimize the effects of this crisis to lowest possible minimum at the operational level. In terms of decision-making, most of the laws have already been approved during 2015-2016, thus eliminating in this way the effect that the reform could have in terms of the legislative process.

Implementation of the envisaged reforms at the policy-making level faces challenges or risks, which relate to domestic and micro or sector levels. Such challenges remain at central planning, policy and coordination level, even of a crosscutting nature, which may have an impact on the activities and expected outcomes.

Administrative capacity in terms of human resources and in terms of knowledge remains one of the most important challenges of public administration reform. The limited number of staff in some units and restriction of absorptive capacity affect both the performance and the level of implementation of some of the activities/reforms as envisaged in the strategy. In particular, monitoring capabilities in regard to the strategic framework monitoring and the monitoring of transparency processes and public information may be mentioned.

Making of infrastructure available in a timely manner, establishment of a monitoring system of work processes and of the service delivery approach and training of the relevant staff will be the main challenges, which the implementation of online services for citizens through ADISA Integrated Centers will face.

Crosscutting Public Administration Reform Strategy faced in the first year one of the major challenges, which was the complete lack of financial resources for its implementation. In order to cover the needs, the government put at the disposal of the strategy implementation domestic financial resources in the frame of the Medium Term Budget Program, while mobilization of funds from IPA and other donors was also made possible. Continuous monitoring by the Minister of State for Public Administration and Innovation was a key factor that led to the mobilization of funds from the government within budgetary constraints. Despite this progress, one of the technical issues, which still remain a challenge, is the assurance that institutions have effective measures in place to implement crosscutting PAR strategies and to lay down requests in their respective budget programs to cover these measures. *Collection of statistical data for a number of areas and the disciplined and systematic implementation of the monitoring processes* has been one of the major challenges, which the strategy faced in a number of areas, and it will continue to face if a frequent system of continuous collection of data processing will fail to be established.

Mid-term evaluation of the strategy is expected to be *carried out* during March - August 2017 with the help of the Council of Europe. Evaluation results will be very important to evaluate the achievement of the objectives as set out in the frame of the policies provided for in Crosscutting Public Administration Reform Strategy, their possible revision and future drafting of a three-year plan for 2018 - 2020. The engagement in this process of all structures responsible for the implementation of policies under the strategy, the implementation of a more transparent and effective consultative process with the

stakeholders will be very important in terms of taking the next steps towards the enhancement of public administration reforms.

In conclusion, *honest and open presentation of the problems, which are encountered in the course of the implementation of strategies*, remains one of the challenges. This requires a change in the work behavior of the Albanian administration including the culture of the analysis and evidencing of problems in the most objective way possible. Positive steps were noted in the course of the process of drafting this report, with the evidencing of a number of the risks and challenges, which the implementation of activities in some areas would encounter. However, this requires a much more systematic and all-inclusive approach across all technical, managerial and political levels.