



REPUBLIKA E SHQIPËRIË
KRYEMINISTRIA



**The CROSSCUTTING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM STRATEGY
2015 – 2020**

Annual Monitoring Report

2017

Tirana, April 2018

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LIST OF ACRONYMS:

ADISA - Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services Albania

AFMIS – Albanian Financial Management Information System

EU – European Union

DoPA – Department of Public Administration

EAMIS - Foreign Aid Management Information System

HRMIS - Human Resource Management Information System

ICSP – Strategic Document of the State

IPSIS - Integrated Planning System Information System

IDPC - Information and Data Protection Commissioner

EC – European Commission

KPI – Key Performance Indicators

PAC – Permanent Recruitment Committee

LM – Line Ministry

CS – Civil Servant

OECD – Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

NGO – Non-governmental Organization

OSS - One Single System

SDG – Sustainable Development Goals

MTBP - Medium Term Budget Program

PFM – Public Financial Management

NPEI – National Plan for European Integration

ENPCR - Electronic Notification and Public Consultation Register

RIA – Regulatory Impact Assessment

OECD/SIGMA – Support for Improvement in Governance and Management

NSDI – National Strategy for Development and Integration

CCPARS – Cross-cutting Public Administration Reform Strategy

IPS – Integrated Planning System

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

I. Executive Summary

The aim of the Annual Monitoring Report of the Cross-cutting Public Administration Reform Strategy 2015-2020 is to present the overall progress of the Strategy implementation based on its four main pillars and the level of achievement of the respective objectives of 2017.

During 2017, work on the implementation of the Crosscutting Strategy for Public Administration Reform was focused on two main directions: (i) *mid-term review of the Strategy and drafting of a new action plan for 2018-2020*; (ii) *implementation of the foreseen activities in the strategy for 2015 - 2017*.

As outlined in the Strategic Document adopted on 15 April 2015, the Strategy underwent a mid-term review process, which ended in the second quarter of 2017. The review included the period 2015-2017 and served to highlight the achievements during the first two years of implementation of the strategy in view of the foreseen results and the level of achievement of the objectives. This review served also as a good basis to guide the priorities for the period of 2018-2020, as well as to identify whether the set indicators or objectives should be revised or not.

Following the mid-term review and restructuring of the central state administration, the Department of Public Administration, with the support of OECD / SIGMA, started to work on the drafting of the New Action Plan 2018-2020, a process that started during the fourth quarter of the 2017.

Based on the findings and recommendations reflected in the mid-term review, the achievements and challenges encountered during the implementation of the Strategy were taken into consideration when drafting this plan. The recommendations of the European Commission's Annual Report for Albania, the SIGMA annual assessment, and the conclusions of the seventh meeting of the Public Administration Reform Special Group , as well as the priorities of the new government, were considered and reflected on a case-by-case basis¹ during the phase of drafting new activities. Attention was also paid to the identification of unaccomplished activities during 2015-2017 in order to include them in the new activity plan. Special focus was devoted to financing activities to ensure that the new plan is based on clear financial resources and a very low level of financial gap. This way, the financial sustainability of the plan can be guaranteed right from its drafting stage.

The New Action Plan 2018-2020 should reflect possible changes of activities by paying particular attention to deadlines and sources of funding to implement the measures to ensure an ambitious and feasible Action Plan.

After the co-operation with all institutions, part of this Strategy, the jointly prepared draft was published on the DoPA website and all interested parties were invited to give their comments and suggestions on this plan². Moreover, The Deputy Prime Minister and the Department of Public Administration organized in April two roundtables of consultations with civil society and

¹ The Seventh Meeting of the Special Group on Reform in Public Administration EU-Albania, took place in Tirana on September 27, 2017

²<http://dap.gov.al/publikime/dokumenta-strategjik/186-test-rdraft-plani-i-ri-i-aktiviteteve-2018-2020>

international partners to discuss the new plan of activities and to finalize this important document in cooperation with all stakeholders.

The Department of Public Administration has continued monitoring the measurement of the performance of the activities periodically throughout the year in parallel with the preparatory work for the drafting of the new activity plan.

Findings of the 2017 annual report are encouraging despite the influence of parliamentary elections, pre-election situation and restructuring of the central administration. Three years after the implementation of the strategy of April 2015, data show that 80%³ of the activities envisaged in the Strategy are under implementation, while 45 of them have been fully accomplished, thus marking an increase of 14 outputs compared to 2016. The pre-election situation of 2017, which led to the appointment of technical ministers and directors at the top of some independent institutions, had a negative impact on the progress of the strategy as the institutions' attention was focused on ensuring that human resources would not be misused during the electoral campaign. Following the parliamentary elections, the central state administration went through a restructuring process, which slowed down the progress of the work towards the implementation of the Strategy's activities. ***However, implementation progress remained positive and marked an increase.***

Regarding the improvement of the policy-making and quality of legislation, Albania has already taken the necessary steps to implement the Regulatory Impact Assessment System (RIA)⁴. The first version of the *Regulatory Impact Assessment Methodology* was approved and followed by the pilot the implementation of this Methodology, while the RIA Network was established with representatives from the Office of the Prime Minister and all line ministries, with the aim of moving ahead and implementing the Regulatory Impact Assessment in Albania.

There has been a positive progress in terms of building information management systems that will contribute to the improvement of policy planning and co-ordination: IPSIS⁵, AFMIS⁶ and EAMIS⁷. These systems will provide an integrated information management with the purpose of an integrated planning and monitoring of strategic policies and financial management/foreign assistance through an integrated system of good governance.

Developments have also taken place made with regard to the completion of legal and institutional mechanisms that ensure public participation in public policy consultation. The Electronic Notification and Public Consultancy Register (ENPCR) has already been set up and is accessible to the public⁸. *The institutional responsibilities regarding the process of monitoring the public*

³ 66 outputs out of a total of 82 outputs.

⁴ This practice aims at improving quality of policy development practices, as well as conducting in-depth analysis of legal acts before their adoption.

⁵ Integrated Planning System Information System

⁶ Financial Management System.

⁷ Foreign Aid Management Information System.

⁸ In 2017, 29 out of 33 legal acts of the Council of Ministers (7 Strategies/Action Plans and 26 draft laws) have been subject to the Public Consultation Process.

consultation are clearly defined following the structural reorganization of the central administration, thus accommodating the responsibility within the structure of the Office of the Prime Minister.

Concerning the improvement of the way of public administration organization and functioning, ***the way in which services are provided to the citizens has been re-designed based on an inclusive and citizen-centered approach.***

During the second half of 2017, the line ministries were restructured in response to the need, which derived from the current changes of the cabinet setup and new areas of responsibility as a result of changing ministerial portfolios, the problems identified in the first 4 years of governance and integration of the governance team horizontally and vertically into an integrated governance system. The purpose of this reform is to guarantee a well-functioning, transparent and efficient public administration, capable of responding to the needs of citizens in terms of public services delivery.

Further progress was made in terms of facilitating the provision of public services during 2017, with the opening of the three integrated service delivery centers in Kruja, Fier and Gjirokastra. ***In addition, a complaints management system has been also established in the context of improving service delivery,*** as a mechanism to handle the complaints filed by the citizens with ADISA Integrated Centers.

In terms of capacity building regarding the implementation of civil service legislation and human resources management, human resources capacities have been assessed in terms of updating and gaining additional knowledge for over 1300 civil servants in positions with inspection functions. The aim of this has been to enable build the capacities of civil servants and provide them with additional knowledge according to the functions and the area, in which they act, in order to further enhance the quality of work in the administration institutions.

The process of recruiting and fulfilling the institutional needs has further improved. During 2017, a series of measures were taken to increase the objectivity of the testing process, thus enriching and improving the quality of the bank of questions of the civil service recruitment processes, preparing a range of guidance materials to assist all potential applicants, training of Permanent Recruitment Committees members on the methodology and accurate evaluation techniques of candidates, cooperation with higher education institutions with a view to informing potential candidates (students and newly graduated students) about employment opportunities in state administration, etc. The competition procedures in regard to the implementation of the annual recruitment plan were suspended for a few months because of the appointment of technical ministers and monitoring of human resources during the electoral campaign to eliminate any misuse of state resources during this period, in order to guarantee the impartiality of the electoral process; this also resulted in a lower percentage of recruitment plan implementation compared to previous years.

The expansion of the Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS) continues to be an important priority. It has been possible to enter into the system information about more than 550 institutions and 45,000 employees. Human resources and finance staff have been trained, among

other things, as Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS) users. It is worth mentioning that ***concrete steps have been taken*** during 2017 ***to enable the generation of payroll through the HRMIS***, a process that is being piloted in 30 state institutions.

Regarding the improvement of administrative and oversight procedures, special attention has been paid to reviewing the procedures of services delivery to the public and to their simplification, including ICT solutions whenever possible and taking into account the new Code Administrative Procedures.

Developments have also taken place in terms of online services that enable the provision of more electronic services to citizens, businesses and administration. Currently, the government portal e-Albania offers 535 electronic services, while 47 state systems interact with each other to ensure real-time communication between citizens and public institutions. ***The digital stamp and the public administration module for issuing administrative documents to the citizen was an innovation of the e-Albania portal⁹ during 2017.***

Positive developments have also occurred in terms of the implementation of the institutional transparency program by public authorities, especially in the case of independent institutions and municipalities. The Office of the Information and of Personal Data Protection Commissioner has continued to supervise the implementation of Law no. 119/2014 "On the right to information" by monitoring various elements of the law such as the following: number of public authorities that have drafted transparency programs, coordinators appointed by public authorities, updating of complaints and responses register, number of complaints reviewed, conducted investigations, hearings held and decisions that have been made. **181** public authorities have approved and have published the transparency program; **227** public authorities have assigned a coordinator for the right of information and **124** public authorities have published a register of requests and responses.

A series of measures have been undertaken with a view to strictly implement the Code of Administrative Procedures in order to draft guidance materials to assist citizens, a set of standard formats directly related to the provisions of the Code and have been drafted, while the work has continued towards the assessment of the approximation of sector laws in accordance with this Code. Information sessions were held with over 400 trainees of different levels by including the central administration and independent institutions about the innovations and changes stemming from the Code. Training of Trainers focused on methods of providing knowledge about the Code, the content of training and training skills of trainers was also organized in the frame of the Twinning Project "*Support to Civil Service Reform in Albania*" funded by the European Union.

In addition to achievements and progress in regard to the implementation of the strategy throughout 2017, it is worth mentioning the challenges we faced during this period. These challenges could have potentially had a direct negative impact on the normal performance of the work and, consequently, on the implementation of the Strategy. ***The pre-election situation, the technical government, or the***

⁹ The e-Albania portal is used by public administration employees to obtain certificates and documents, which are found as portal services (with digital stamp) for filling in the accompanying documentation of the service requested by the citizen. These documents are no longer required from the citizen when receiving a public service.

restructuring could have had a direct or indirect impact on the normal functioning of the administration. However, data show that, compared to last year, there is an increase of 4% of the activities under implementation. Upon the establishment of the new government cabinet and the restructuring of the central administration, the institutions continued to work normally in most cases, thus continuing to report on the implementation of the Strategy both, in the first and the second half of 2017.

Although the above-mentioned elements delayed the process of drafting the new Action Plan of 2018-2020, the work for drafting of the new plan was intensified upon the completion of the restructuring and the placement of existing employees within the new structures despite the establishment of the new government cabinet, changing the number of ministries from 16 to 11, but also despite the reallocation of responsibilities based on the new organization. In this context, during the last three months of 2017 and the first three months of 2018, work was jointly carried out to develop a good plan with clear, measurable, ambitious, but feasible, activities with a particular focus on the financing activities and avoiding the financial gap, as one of the challenges that we have face during the three years of the implementation of this strategy.

Over the next three years, the work will focus on the achievement of the objectives of the strategy by ensuring the progress of the implementation of the action plan and the ongoing monitoring of the Strategy.

II. Introduction

Public administration reform in Albania remains crucial to the process of country integration into the European Union. A professional, merit-based professional administration capable of delivering quality services to the public is a prerequisite for transparent and democratic governance. A well-defined strategic framework forms the foundation, on which the implementation of public administration reform will be based.

The Crosscutting Public Administration Reform Strategy, adopted in April 2015, serves as a strategic document that guides administration reform, based on four main pillars, clear objectives and a concrete action plan.

Giving of the recommendation by the European Commission to open the negotiation process with Albania marks a significant step forward in the European integration process, a process which requires a professional administration and human and material capacities to enable the implementation of national policies and objectives.

In this context, the Strategy is led by the vision 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”.

Its implementation is based on the reforms that should be undertaken in the four main priority pillars aimed at further improvement and development of the following:

- i. System of Policy Making and Quality of Legislation;
- ii. Organization of Public Administration;
- iii. Civil Service and Human Resource Management;
- iv. Administrative Procedures and Oversight;

Implementation of the Strategy is achieved through the activities, which are set out in the Action Plan. To monitor the extent of progress, which is made in regard to the accomplishment of activities, a regular monitoring and evaluation process is in place. 12 periodic reports were prepared during 2015-2017 by focusing on the ongoing monitoring of the accomplishment of the activities.

Meanwhile, the achievements of the strategy implementation and its impact are assessed on an annual basis, through the evaluation of the success indicators set out in the Strategy's objectives. ***This is the third Annual Monitoring Report of the Strategy and the evaluation of the achievements based on the objectives.***

The monitoring reports are drawn up in cooperation with all the institutions involved and they are discussed in the respective thematic group, and then adopted in the Integrated Policy Management Group of the Good Governance and Public Administration.

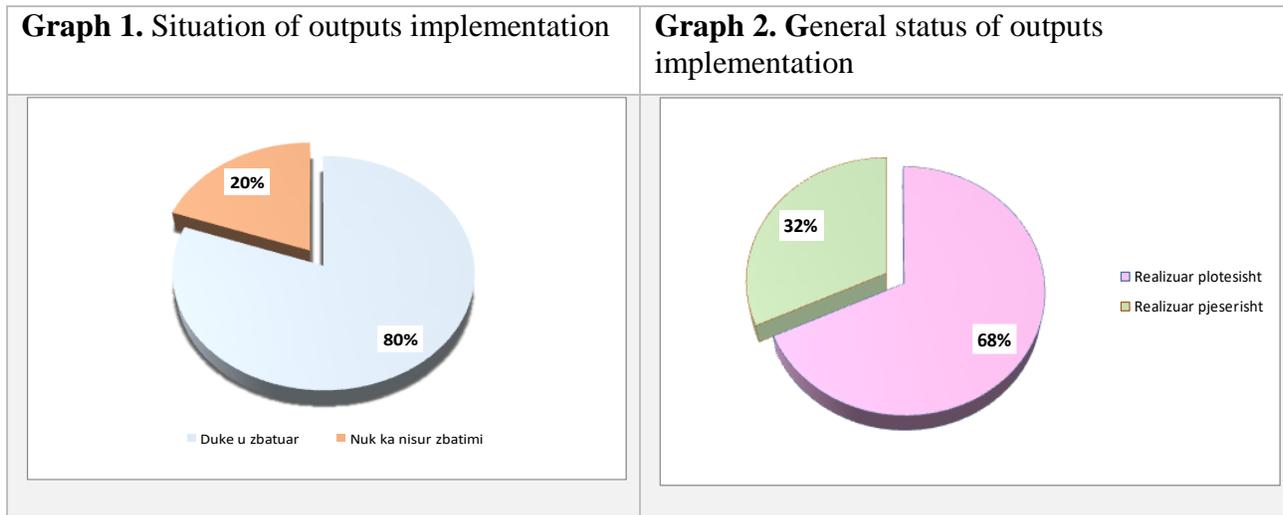
The developments and steps taken by Albania in terms of meeting the objectives of the Crosscutting Public Administration Reform Strategy in all four pillars aim at ***fulfilling the vision of this Strategy and strengthening of an administration, which is professional, knowledgeable and aware of its role in the European Union integration process.***

As one of the five priorities to be fulfilled by Albania in order to open negotiations, public administration reform requires serious engagement, persistence to face the challenges it poses, sustained support, but, above all, it requires inter-institutional involvement and contribution.

The focus is and will continue to be the strengthening of a professional public administration with civil servants and employees who work based on common values and exercise their functions with integrity.

III. Overall evaluation of the strategy progress¹⁰

The 2015-2017 Action Plan provides for the **implementation of 53 core activities and 82 outputs in total**. By the end of 2017, out of 82 outputs in total, **66 of them were under implementation (or 80% of the total)** (Chart 1). Of these, 45 outputs are evaluated as fully accomplished, thus marking an increase of 14 outputs compared to 31 outputs fully accomplished in 2016.



It's important to mention that the implementation of the Strategy's activities has kept increasing every year and, despite the implementation challenges, the implementation has continued smoothly, **therefore showing a positive trend of CCPARS performance in terms of meeting the objectives.**

During 2017, the pre-election situation, which was accompanied by a number of changes in the government's cabinet and technical leaders were appointed at the top of several independent institutions, had a negative impact on the strategy's progress, because the pace of implementation of some of the activities went down. After the parliamentary elections, the central state administration went through a restructuring process, which slowed down the continuation of the work regarding the implementation of the Strategy's activities. **Despite this situation, implementation progress remained positive, although not at the right pace.**

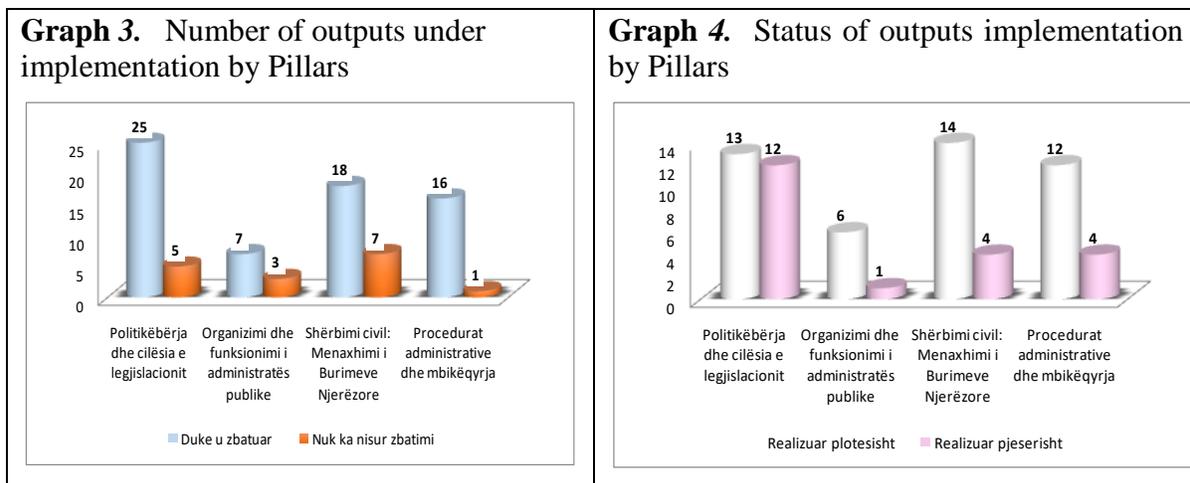
The assessment of the level and status of the implementation of CCPARS activities for 2017 is based on the information provided by each responsible unit. The Department of Public Administration conducted the assessment of information during the first quarter of 2018 and continued with the drafting of the report in April.

¹⁰ The evaluation of the 2017 developments in terms of achieving the objectives of the Strategy is carried out through the evaluation of the indicators (success indicators) foreseen in the Strategy document, while the evaluation of the progress implementation of the reforms envisaged within the strategy is based on the evaluation of the progress of implementation of the activities provided for in the Action Plan.

Following the presentation of the situation as above, out of a total of 66 outputs under implementation (or 80%), **45 (or 68%) of them were fully implemented by the end of 2017**. Compared to the 2016 Report, **there is an increase of 4% of the total of outputs under implementation** (Graph 2).

The number of outputs under implementation for each of the Pillars is as follows:

- i. *Pillar I: "Policy-making and Quality of Legislation"* (25 outputs out of 30 in total);
- ii. *Pillar II: "Organization and Functioning of Public Administration"* (7 outputs out of 10 in total);
- iii. *Pillar III: "Civil Service: Human Resource Management"* (18 outputs out of 25 in total);
- iv. *Pillar IV: "Administrative Procedures and Oversight"* (16 outputs out of 17 in total).



The above graphic presentations represent a comparative situation regarding the ongoing status of work in priority areas. As the charts show, the number of outputs that are under implementation is as follows:

- > *Under Pillar I (25 outputs out of 30 in total, thus marking an increase of 2 outputs compared to the 2016 reporting);*
- > *Under Pillar II, (7 outputs out of 10, which is comparatively the same number as in the previous reporting period).*
- > *Under Pillar III (18 out of 25 in total, thus marking an increase of 1 output more compared to the previous reporting period).*
- > *Under Pillar IV (16 outputs under implementation out of 17, thus marking an increase of 1 output more compared to the previous period).*

Starting of a number of activities¹¹ has been conditioned by the progress of the implementation of the IPA 2014 Project "Implementation of civil service reform in public administration", which is expected to start within 2018.

Graph 5. Progress of outputs implementation until the end of 2017



In general, the percentage of activities under implementation is over 70% for the four pillars.

Figure 5 shows in a comparative way the progress of fully accomplished outputs since the beginning of the implementation of the Strategy in 2015. So, as it can be seen, *the number of outputs accomplished in 2017 is nine times higher than in 2015.*

In order to improve the policymaking system and quality of legislation¹², *Albania has already taken the necessary steps to implement the Regulatory*

Impact Assessment (RIA) system. The aim of *this new system* is to improve the quality of the policy development process based on conducting an in-depth analysis of legal acts before their adoption. Impact Assessment, which is already mandatory¹³, will also increase transparency and improve the quality of legislation drafting. The first version of the *Regulatory Impact Assessment Methodology*¹⁴ was approved in 2017 with the support provided by OECD / SIGMA experts and it was followed with the piloting of the implementation of this Methodology. During February 2018 "RIA Network" was established composed of representatives from the Office of Prime Minister and all line ministries, with the aim to take ahead and implement the Regulatory Impact Assessment in Albania.

There has been positive progress in regard to the development of three information management systems: IPSIS¹⁵, AFMIS¹⁶ and EAMIS¹⁷ with the view to carry out the integrated planning and monitoring of strategic policies and financial management/foreign assistance through an integrated good governance system.

The legal and institutional mechanisms that ensure public participation in public policy consultation are completed. The Electronic Notification and Public Consultancy Register (ENPCR)

11 Such as, for example, under Objective 7 " 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 s" will start after the implementation of the IPA 2014 Project "Implementation of civil service reform in public administration".

12 Reform stipulated under Pillar I.

13 In order to implement this important process, the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 197 dated 11.04.2018, which amends the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 584 dated 28.08.2003 of the Council of Ministers, "On the approval of the Rules of Procedure of the Council of Ministers". These changes stipulate, *inter alia*, the obligation to carry out impact assessment during the policy-making / legislation drafting process.

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15 Integrated Planning System Information System.

16 Financial Management System.

17 Foreign Aid Management Information System.

has already been set up and is accessible to the public. Following the structural reorganization of the central administration, *institutional responsibilities regarding the public consultation monitoring process* are clearly defined, thus placing responsibility within the Office of the Prime Minister. 29 out of 33 legal acts of the Council of Ministers (7 Strategies/Action Plans and 26 Draft Laws) were subject to the Public Consultation process in 2017. Special attention will be given during 2018 to the improvement of the quality of the public consultation process through mechanisms that ensure reflection of citizen's and stakeholders' contribution in the public policies. It's foreseen to draw up a methodological guide for the development and monitoring of the public consultation process.

There has been progress under Pillar II, the aim of which is to improve the way the public administration is organized and functions ***through a radical process of re-building the way services are provided to citizen based on a comprehensive and citizen-centered approach.***

Three integrated service delivery centers have been opened in Kruja, Fier and Gjirokastra During 2017, thus covering ADISA services for around 209,142 citizens and businesses. *A complaint management system has been established as mechanism to handle the complaints that are filed by the citizens with ADISA Integrated Centers.*

In order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the central administration and to address the problems that have been identified in the first 4 years of governance, the line ministries were restructured during the second half of 2017. This restructuring enables the governance team to be integrated horizontally and vertically into a well-integrated governance system. A similar approach will also be followed for the subordinate institutions and agencies in order to improve the way the administration is organized and to further improve the way of services delivery to citizens and businesses, thus eliminating overlapping of the functions of these institutions.

Work has continued across all state administration institutions to ensure the rigorous implementation of legislation on civil servants. The Human Resource Directorates have had the main role in this process in order to raise the awareness of employees for the recognition, unification and oversight of all procedures in regard to the improvement of the public administration performance.

There has been further improvement of the recruitment process and the fulfillment of institutional needs. A series of measures have been taken during 2017 in terms of the enrichment and improvement of the quality of the questions bank for the recruitment processes of the civil service. These measures included the following: preparation of a set of guidance materials to help all potential applicants (video tutorials on how to apply, explanatory papers on frequently asked questions, etc.); training of the members of the Permanent Recruitment Committees on the methodology and precise evaluation techniques of candidates; cooperation with higher education institutions in order to inform potential candidates (students and new graduates) about employment opportunities in the state administration, etc..

Concrete steps have been taken during 2017 ***to enable the generation of salaries of administrative staff through HRMIS***, a process that is being piloted in 30 state institutions. ***In addition, the Human***

Resources Management Information System (HRMIS) has been further enriched with data from public administration institutions, independent institutions and local government units, thus making it possible to enter into the system information about more than 550 institutions and 45,000 employees. Human resources and finance staff have been trained, among other things, as Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS) users.

Good progress has been made in terms of improving the administrative and oversight procedures, where the review of procedures regarding services delivery to the public and their simplification, including ICT solutions whenever possible, remains a priority. Currently, the government portal e-Albania offers 535 electronic services, while 47 state systems interact with each other to ensure real-time communication between the citizen and public institutions. ***The public administration coordinates, for the first time, the generation of 29 documents with a digital stamp.***

IV. The progress of reforms implementation in the frame of each priority

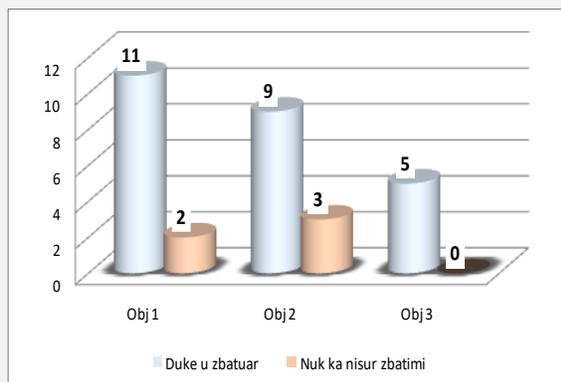
Pillar I: Policymaking and Quality of Legislation

The main objectives focus on the following:

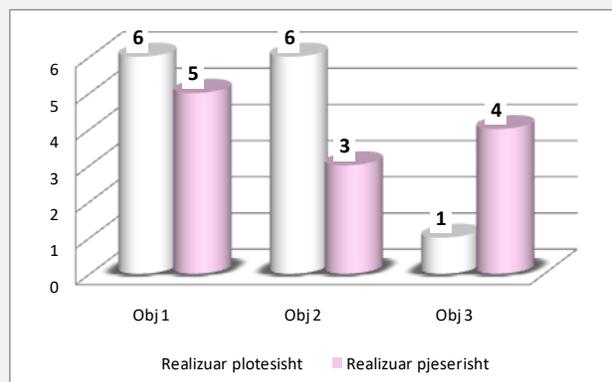
- ❖ *Improvement of policy planning and coordination to draft government strategic documents that turn priorities into concrete actions;*
- ❖ *Implementation of a comprehensive and transparent law drafting system, which is based on policies and ensure alignment with the acquis;*
- ❖ *Building an effective monitoring and evaluation system for the strategies, programs and legal framework, based on the following: (i) collection of data, through an impartial and transparent process, to develop and implement the strategies, programs and legislation, as well as (ii) based on making analyses to assess the effects generated by the policy implementation.*

Implementation of 2 new outputs (bringing the total number of outputs to 25) started and 5 new outputs were fully implemented in 2017 compared to 2016 (bringing the total number of outputs to 13) under Pillar 1 "Policy-making and quality of legislation".

Graph 6. Number of outputs under implementation by Objectives



Graph 7. Status of the implementation of outputs by Objectives



Progress compared to each objective

Out of 13 outputs that are stipulated under **Objective 1** "Improved planning and coordination policies to draft government strategic documents, which turn priorities into concrete actions" most of them (11) have already started implementing and 6 have been fully implemented by the end of 2017, compared to 3 activities that were fully implemented in 2016.

Progress has been made towards the further development of the strategic framework. Improvement of policy planning and coordination is closely related to the implementation of the Integrated Planning System, through which the Government intends to harmonize the strategic framework/strategic priorities with medium-term financial planning by defining in general terms the role, status and hierarchy of strategic planning.

7 sectoral strategy papers have been approved in 2017 by the Government of Albania, therefore completing and harmonizing the IPS strategic framework¹⁸. The following were approved in 2017 in the frame of the consolidation of the strategic framework:

- *National Plan for European Integration 2017-2020;*
- *Economic Reform Program 2018-2020;*
- *Mid-term Debt Management Strategy 2018-2020;*
- *Official Statistics Program 2017-2021;*
- *National Health Sector Strategy;*
- *Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2017-2022;*
- *Action Plan against Cannabis Cultivation and Trafficking 2017-2020.*

More specifically, 26 strategies were approved until December 2017 as parts of NSDI II, while 3 strategic documents are in the drafting phase. In addition, 40% of the strategic documents planned in the National Plan for European Integration (PCI) have been approved, while 60% of the planned documents are still in the drafting phase.

The quality of the sector and crosscutting strategic framework and the alignment with mid-term budget planning has improved over the past three years, thus marking an increase of 3%. Based on the SIGMA 2017 Report, the reconciliation rate between the estimated costs of the sector strategies and the costs envisaged in the Medium Term Budget Program is estimated to be 56% versus 53% in the OECD/SIGMA 2015 assessment.

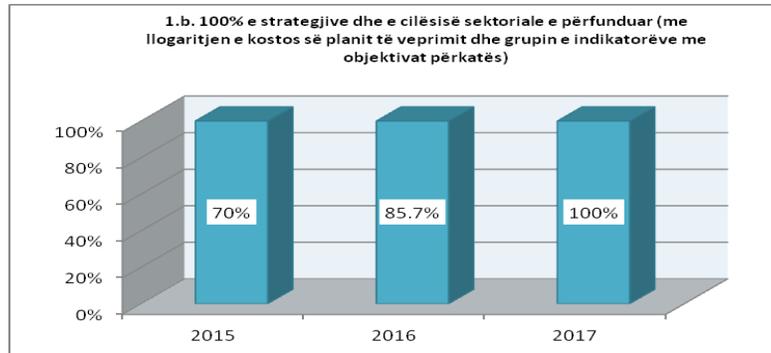
To ensure compatibility of the strategic framework with the Medium Term Budget Program, negotiation sessions were conducted by the Ministry of Finance, based on the MTBP calendar¹⁹. The Department of Development and Good Governance has analyzed in this process 41 MTBP-s covering about 32% of the overall programs implementing the Strategic Framework (NSDI II and sector and/or crosscutting strategies).

<i>Indicator 1a.</i>	Value 2017
100% of strategic regulatory framework drafted and implemented	35%

¹⁸ The National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020, as a key component of the Integrated Planning System (IPS), contains the vision, priorities, objectives and tools for social and economic development and the aspirations for the country's European Integration up to 2020.

¹⁹ With the participation of the Department of Development and Good Governance and the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs during May-June 2017, with line ministries and other budget institutions.

Based on the available data for 2017, 20 documents are foreseen to be drafted and approved as part of the SRF. The analysis shows that 7 documents were drafted and approved as part of the SRF in 2017. As to the above, it results that 35% of the strategic framework was drafted in 2017.



Indicator 1b.

Value 2017

“100% of sector strategies and quality finished (with the action plan costing and set of indicators with corresponding goals)

100%

With regard to Indicator 1b "100% of sector strategies and quality finished", this indicator has been achieved 100% in 2017 compared to 85.7% in 2016 and 70% in 2015.

2 Strategies were developed during 2017: "*National Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2017-2022*" and "*National Health Sector Strategy 2016 - 2020*". Both of these Strategies have been drafted in accordance with the Prime Minister's Order on drafting strategic documents.

In terms of integrated policy management, the mid-term review of the Strategic State Document (ICSP 2017-2020) was conducted in 2017 in order to identify priority policies and measures. This process was coordinated by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Department of Development and Good Governance together with line ministries.

The analysis developed in this regard addressed and took into consideration the elements related to the following:

- i. Developments in the frame of Enlargement Policy;
- ii. Developments of IPA II beneficiaries;
- iii. Significant changes in the overall status of IPA II beneficiaries (institutional or political changes);
- iv. Policy changes that may affect the priorities of financial assistance as defined in the Strategy Papers;
- v. Sector policies/strategies reviews (including sectors that have not been addressed so far) that would require more attention than it's currently provided in the context of programming;
- vi. Developments related to implementation conditions (indirect management by beneficiaries).

About 43 priority measures were consulted in the first six months of 2017, mainly related to the preparation of reforms in the frame of Democracy, Rule of Law and Internal Affairs, mainly focused on two pillars:

- a. Development policies guided towards the environmental sector, competition sector and innovation sector;
- b. Social policies guided towards employment, education, promotion of gender mainstreaming and human capital development.

In the framework of strengthening the systemic approach and an integrated governance system, a significant progress has been made in 2017 for the finalization of three information management systems: IPSIS²⁰, AFMIS²¹ and EAMIS²². The implementation of these three systems directly supports the modernization of public administration and the implementation of good governance principles which, despite the complex nature, are designed to function as a single system *One Single System OSS*). Operating as a single (OSS), there are created the conditions for a systematic and performance-oriented approach, efficient policy planning, consistent with budget programs, and reporting and monitoring results and performance for key indicators.

The major objectives of the system / One Single System (IPSI, AFMIS and EAMIS) consist of:

- i. Performance-Oriented Management & Results through Evaluation Indicators;
- ii. Increasing the Quality of Good Governance, Accountability & Transparency;
- iii. Creating a flexible multi-dimensional reporting system.

Important institutional steps have been taken to reflect the Sustainable Development Goals in National Policies ("Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development of the United Nations" Transforming Our World "and Harmonization and Nationalization"). In 2017, the High-Level Inter-Ministerial Committee for the implementation of the OSHQ, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, was established and a meeting of this Committee was held. Also, a technical working group was set up to compile the SDO Report and Roadmap²³.

During 2017, a first assessment was made on the level of alignment of the SDO with the country's strategic framework. This assessment shows that:

- 33% of the indicators from the global indicator framework are in line with national indicators;
- 24% of indicators from the global indicator framework are in partial alignment with national indicators;
- 43% of indicators from the global indicator framework are not available with national indicators;
- 7% of the indicators from the global indicator framework are not applicable to the country.

The availability of global indicators for the SDO turns out that:

²⁰ Integrated Information Management System

²¹ Financial Management System

²² Foreign Assistance Management System

²³ In September 2015, at the United Nations General Assembly (UN) General Assembly meeting, the Government of Albania, along with the 192 UN member states, committed itself to implementing the 2015-2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through approval of the joint statement. The agenda for sustainable development is very complex. It consists of 17 Sustainable Development Objectives (SDOs) and 169 targets, specific objectives (targets), covering all major dimensions of development:

(I) Economic size, (II) Social dimension, and
(III) Dimension of the environment.

- Number of SDO targets with at least one indicator available in Albania 62 (or 37%);
- Number of SDO targets with at least one indicator available in Albania 13 (or 8%);
- Number of SDO objectives with at least one partially available indicator in Albania 17 (or 10%);
- Number of SDO targets without indicators available in Albania 77 (or 46%).

By the end of 2017, the SDO Harmonization Report was finalized with the objectives of the country's existing strategies and policies.

Also, during 2017, a special attention has been paid to capacity building and capacity strengthening for strategic planning. In this framework, curricula have been developed and training cycles / packages have been developed by the Albanian School of Public Administration (ASPA) regarding the drafting and monitoring of the strategic framework & sectoral / cross-cutting strategies (according to the existing methodology). **54 Civil Service Officers (CSs) for the Strategic Framework and 20% CS for Medium-Term Budget Program were trained.**

Indicator 1c.	Value 2017
70% of policy-making trained staff, at least once for strategic planning issues	49%



The above indicator marked an increase in 2017 with regard to trained policy-makers, bringing this figure to 49%, compared to 33.6% in 2016.

Objective 2 "A comprehensive and all-inclusive sstem of law drafting and ensuring alignment with the acquis" containing a total of 12 products (6 of which are fully implemented compared to 4 in 2016 and 3 are under implementation).

The steps required to implement the Impact Assessment System have already been taken. The Impact Assessment and the process that is being followed for the implementation of this important instrument aims at improving the quality of policy development practices and conducts in-depth analysis of legal acts before their adoption. The Impact Assessment Process, which will affect all institutions involved in the process of drafting legislation, will also help increase transparency and improve the quality of drafting legislation. In order to improve the process of conducting impact assessments, through the support provided by OECD / SIGMA experts during 2017, this process continued with the adoption of the first version of **the Impact Assessment Methodology** and subsequently with piloting the implementation of this Methodology. More specifically, through the

Prime Minister's Order no 102, dated 14.06.2017, "On the establishment of working groups for piloting the implementation of the Impact Assessment Methodology, in some ministries", as amended by Order no. 194, dated 09.11.2017, "On an amendment to the Decision no 102, dated 14.06.2017, the Prime Minister initiated **two pilot processes**²⁴ for the implementation of the first version of the Impact Assessment methodology, as well as training sessions by OECD / SIGMA international experts to finalize the pilot implementation phase of the Methodology for Impact Assessment..

We are aware that the development and coordination of policies in general, and more specifically their translation into legal acts, faces many challenges. Being a complex exercise, it can not be accomplished in time and quality without having structures within the government and the human capacities that guarantee it, fulfilling the functions for a well-organized system with sustainable and long-term policy-making bases. To this end, through the new organizational structures adopted in October 2017, the ministries already have **a dedicated unit for monitoring the impact assessment**. The coordination of the evaluation process is carried out by the Regulatory and Compliance Department at the Prime Minister.

Progress has been made in completing the legal and institutional mechanisms that ensure public participation in public policy consultation. After the approval of the Council of Ministers Decision no 848, dated 7.10.2015 "On the Approval of the Rules for the Creation and Administration of the Electronic Register for Notification and Public Consultation", there was launched in October 2016, the Electronic Notification and Public Consultation Register (RENJK), which is accessible to all at the official website www.konsultimipublik.gov.al.

With the introduction of the electronic system, it has become possible to use an important instrument for conducting the public consultation process in accordance with the standards required by law no 146/2014 "On Public Notification and Consultation". For 2017, 33 legal acts have been approved by the Council of Ministers (7 Strategy / Action Plans and 26 draft laws), whereof 29 acts have undergone public consultation process.

Ministries have achieved 87% of their 2017 target for consulting these laws. The quality of the public consultation process is estimated at 5.15 points. There is a decrease in both the percentage of the consulted laws and the quality of the consultation process. In order to address this problem, the government will take steps to improve the quality of the public consultation process through mechanisms that provide reflection on public policies of citizen and stakeholder contribution. It is foreseen to draw up a methodological guide for the development and monitoring of the public consultation process.

Indicator 1d. Based on the World Economic Forum 2017-2018 Report on "Global Competitiveness", the value of the Albanian Transparency Index for Albania is 4.7 out of the 5 targeted objective.

<i>Indicator 1d.</i>	Value 2017
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²⁴ Ministry of Finance and Economy in drafting the "Employment Promotion" draft law;
Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy in drafting the draft-law "Promoting production, transport, trade and use of energy from renewable sources".

Improving the Transparency Index during the Policy Making Process by the Government, according to the World Economic Forum	4.7
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Indicator 2 a. The measurement of this indicator is subject to the activity of the Regulatory and Compliance Department and will be based on the methodology described in the passport of this indicator, **starting in 2019**. For 2017, this indicator marks an achievement in adopting RIA methodology and conducting two Impact Analysis piloting attempts, that have been successfully implemented.

<i>Indicator 2a.</i>	Value 2017
The quality of the impact assessment analysis and the assessment of the implementation of important legal acts being drafted and published	Starting in 2019

Compared with 2016, there is a constant trend in the level of laws passed to public consultation (87% in 2016) and a downward trend for the quality of consultation (6.17 in 2016).

<i>Indicator 2b.</i>	Value 2017
Percentage of legal acts, which have gone through a wide process of public consultation and evidence of public and stakeholders involvement in the process	87%

Indicator 2c. During 2017, the Regulatory and Compliance Department monitored changes to legislation within the 12-month period from the adoption of the basic law or its latest amendment. The monitoring process data show that out of 88 draft laws that were adopted in 2017, **8 of them have undergone changes within the 12-month period since the adoption of the law itself or its latest amendment.**

<i>Indicator 2c.</i>	Value 2017
Number of legal acts amended within the first year of adoption	8

Objective 3 "Establish an effective monitoring and evaluation system for effective strategies, programs and legal framework, based on: 1) the collection of data, through a transparent and impartial process for the drafting and implementation of strategies, programs and legislation, and 2) in the compilation of analysis for the evaluation of the effects generated by the implementation.

Monitoring the implementation of the strategies is a very important process which ensures not only increased responsibility and accountability regarding the achievement of certain measures and objectives in each strategy approved by the government, but above all it is also a process that helps decision-makers in the clear reflection of the progress of implementation of various sectoral reforms, timely identification of various issues that may accompany the process of implementing the

strategies. Currently there is an NSDI monitoring system, while the package of methodological framework for monitoring the strategies has been finalized, with the support of OECD / SIGMA²⁵

In this regard, the implementation of the monitoring framework for 2017 was conceived in several phases, from which the first phase provided for the drafting of monitoring reports for the primary strategic framework, supported by IPA (through budget support), in order to assess:

- i. Achieving objectives and performance (performance indicators) of sector and / or cross-cutting strategies that are monitored and reported on an annual basis. For each strategy (out of the seven pilot strategies), an Annual Progress Report was prepared to present the achieved results;
- ii. Two monitoring reports were prepared for the Action Plan: the 6-month report and the annual report.

Currently, the Public Sector Reform and Public Finance Reform (PFM) Strategy has fully implemented the new methodology, including indicators passports and annual and semi-annual monitoring reports.

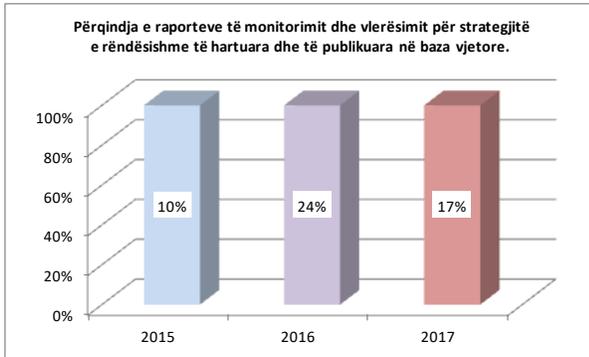
The current situation for the five pilot strategies is as follows:

1. "National Strategy for Employment and Skills 2014-2020" - the indicators passports and the monitoring report are prepared according to the methodology.
2. "Consumer Protection and Market Surveillance Cross-Sector Strategy 2014-2020" - indicators passports are being prepared (based on the new methodology).
3. "Cross-cutting Strategy against Corruption 2015-2020" - passports of indicators (based on new methodology) are being prepared which are currently being reviewed and reviewed.
4. "Transport Strategy" - has progressed in terms of monitoring and during 2017 drafted a first draft of the monitoring report.
5. "Justice Strategy" has set up a dedicated strategy monitoring facility and are drafting the passports of the indicators.

Indicator 3a.	Value 2017
Percentage of monitoring and evaluation reports for important strategies compiled and published annually ²⁶ .	17%

²⁵ The scope of the monitoring and reporting framework is to provide NSDI monitoring and reporting, for the sectoral and cross-cutting strategies as well as strategic documents with a view to aligning with the mid-term budget planning process, pre-accession negotiation processes as well as the reform agenda .

²⁶ For the calculation of this indicator were taken into account for 2017 only 7 annual reports were drafted (CSPAR; PFM; Employment; Transport; Decentralization; Consumer Protection and Intellectual Property), from the latter only 3 reports were published.



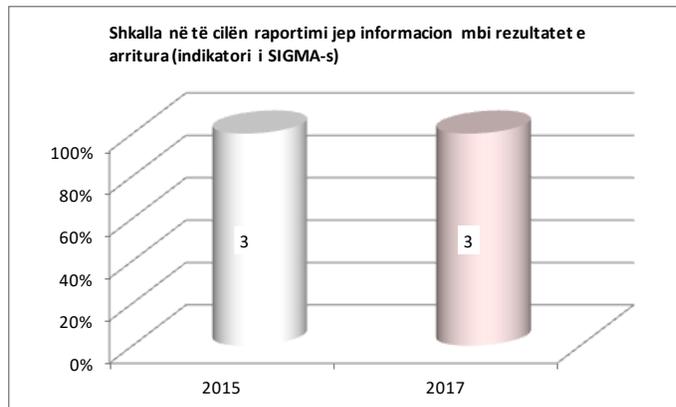
Monitoring reports have been drafted for the Strategy on Intellectual Property as well as for the Decentralization Reform Strategy.

Indicator 3b.

Value 2017

The extent to which reporting provides information on the achieved results (SIGMA indicator)

3



There is no change in the value of this indicator, compared to 2015.

According to the OECD / SIGMA ²⁷ Assessment Report, "a set of documents and reports drafted by the central administration and independent institutions are not published on websites and there is no uniform standard for their

design."

Indicator 3c.

Value 2017

Number of public consultations / presentations organized to discuss monitoring and evaluation reports.

5

Compared to 2015, which was the baseline year, the indicator has increased by 1 point. During 2017, 5 Monitoring Reports were drafted and adopted following a consultation process. More concretely:

- Mid-term Review Report of the Inter-Sectoral Strategy Public Administration Reform 2015 - 2020 (September 2017);
- 6 Monthly Report on the Implementation of SNRAP 2015 - 2020 (July 2017)
- 6 Monthly Report on the Implementation of the Public Finance Management Strategy (July 2017);
- Annual Report on the Implementation of the Anti - Corruption Strategy (July 2017);
- Annual Report on the Implementation of the Decentralization Strategy (October 2017);

²⁷ See: Evaluation Report "Principles of Public Administration" p. 24

Main challenges:

- Currently, the IPS system is in the phase of automating its main pillars, **consisting in the establishment and operation of three MIS systems, which will function as a one-stop-shop for public policy & finance management**, by the state administration. The three systems are designed as a Single Multi-Beneficiary Integrated System, creating the conditions to link planning-budgeting-execution, to have information and real-time monitoring of performance.
- **Also, the strengthening of the legal package** with the aim of standardizing the hierarchical scale between the strategic documents and the compatibility of the strategic framework with medium-term budget planning is another dynamic in this regard. **The above has been envisaged for the review of the legal framework, the development of guidelines for the strategic framework, the updating of consistent monitoring guidelines and coherence with management systems (IPSIS and AFMIS approved systems design).**
- **Increase of technical capacities at the central level** (support for system capacity-building users in the area of system management and processes related to strategic planning).

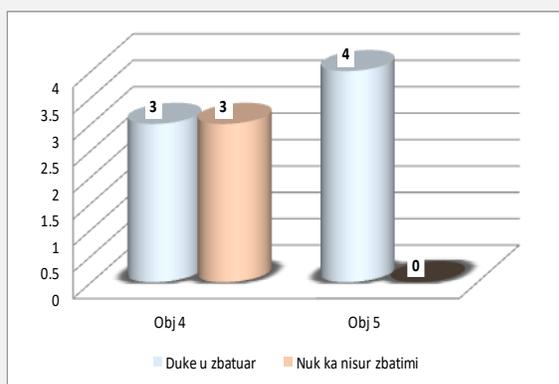
Pillar II: Organization and Functioning of Public Administration

The planned objectives under Pillar II are aiming at:

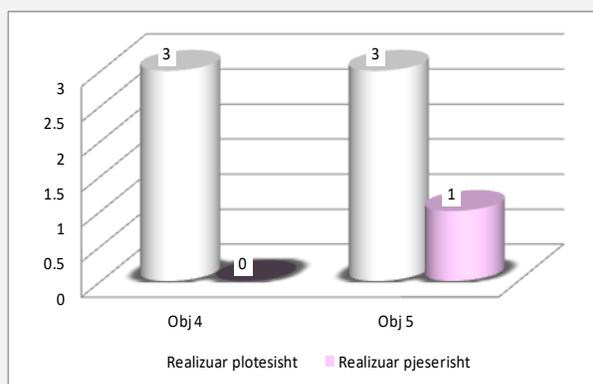
- ❖ *Strengthening the structures of public administration in order to improve the provision of services to the public.*
- ❖ *Providing improved, accessible, and improved public services by reducing opportunities for corruption and strengthening ethics in the provision of public services.*

This pillar consists of 10 activities, 7 of which have begun to be implemented and 6 of them have been fully implemented until 2017 (Graph 10), compared to 4 fully accomplished activities in 2016.

Graph 8. Number of products to be implemented according to Objectives



Graph 9. Status of product implementation according to Objectives



Progress towards each objective

In Objective 4 "Strengthening public administration structures to improve public service delivery", 3 products out of 6 provided under this target have been implemented and 3 of them have been implemented.

During the second half of 2017, the line ministries started to be restructured as a response to the need stemming from the current changes in cabinet format and new areas of responsibility as a result of changing ministerial portfolios, the problems identified in the previous 4-year governance and integrating the governing team horizontally and vertically, into an integrated governing system. The purpose of this reform is to guarantee a well-functioning, transparent and efficient, public administration, capable of responding to the needs of citizens in terms of providing public services.

The main principles, whereon this restructuring is built, relate to the need to be more citizen-oriented, to differentiate political functions and to optimize distribution over the territory. The approach being followed is of a systemic and integrated nature.

The internal organization reform of the Prime Minister's Office and line ministries by placing the ministries in their lead role in the respective sector by facilitating the ministry's apparatus from managerial, operational, service delivery, procurement, licensing, project implementation, etc. by delegating them down to agencies. Also, work has begun to reform the dependent institutions.

As part of the implementation of the territorial-administrative reform and the strengthening of municipalities, methodological support has been provided for the organization and functioning of the Administrative Units with new organizational models. By the end of 2017, recommendations for new structures in some municipalities and administrative units were provided.

<i>Indicator 4 a.</i>	Value 2017
The extent to which the structures of ministries and other institutions are rational and coherent (SIGMA indicator)	2

This indicator has not changed²⁸ since it refers to the OECD / SIGMA assessment in early 2017 and covers the assessment period 2015-2016, during which time the administration did not undergo significant structural changes. As a result, the indicator does not take into account the changes occurring in the administration structures after the parliamentary elections.

During 2017, one-stop-shop integrated service centers were set up in Tirana, Kavaja, Kruja, Fier, Gjirokastra, and one-stop-shops was established in 11 municipalities (compared to 5 municipalities in 2016): Shkodër, Lezhë, Durrës, Elbasan, Korçë, Vau Dejës, Mat, Klos, Sarandë, Berat and Fier. The establishment of the center in the Municipality of Roskovec is also completed. In each of the municipalities, over 70 administrative services have been implemented, as well as the use of the system in the HRs. The number of services identified referring to the new functions being transferred to the local government has increased from 67 to 109 digitized services.

Within the support for the functioning of the LGUs and strengthening of implementing capacities and the dissemination of best practices has been and will continue to be a key priority for the functioning of the local administration. Assistance will be provided for technical development and on-the-job training for municipal staff and their administrative units to improve tax collection work; designing alternative methods for increasing their own income; better asset management and increased predictability, accuracy and transparency of budget processes and financial management and control of local government. Further technical assistance will be provided for the capacity building of municipalities to better serve the citizens.

The challenge for the coming year is the functional structural review of dependent institutions and the definition of clear rules and standards in the area of institution building and measurement of their performance.

²⁸ See OECD / SIGMA Evaluation Report 2017 "Principles of Public Administration" p. 89-90

In the context of Objective 5 "Improved, accessible and integrated public services reducing the opportunities for corruption and strengthening of ethics in the provision of public services" with 3 out of 4 foreseen products being provided for(compared to 1 product fully implemented in the year 2016).

In the framework of the creation of a new model for the delivery of public services, the Reception Offices have been separated from the Responsible Service Delivery Offices, and Integrated Centers of territorial expansion have been set up in the Republic of Albania.

During the year 2017, Integrated Centers ADISA Krujë, Fier and Gjirokastra are opened, whereby offering:

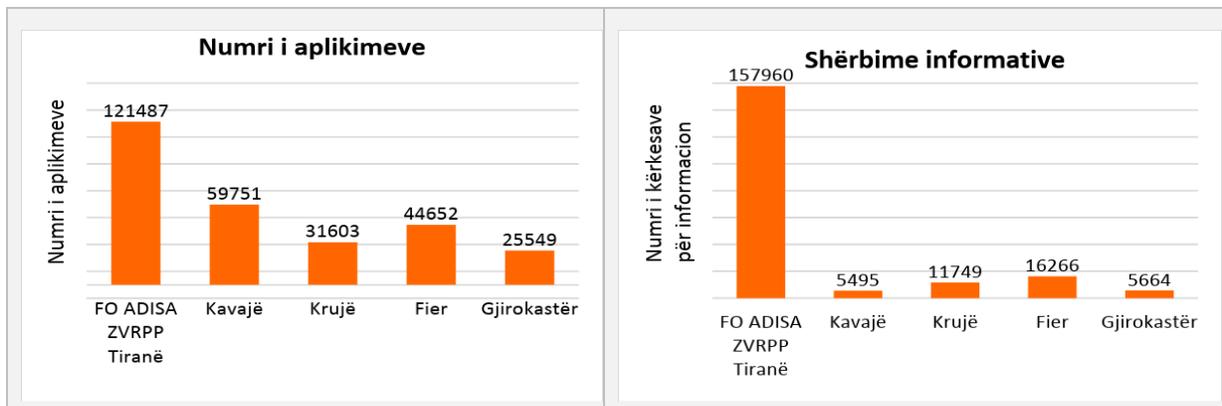
- 1) ***ADISA Kruja Integrated Center - 229*** services of ***6*** institutions in***14*** reception counters, namely FSDKSH, ZRPP, ISSH, DPGJC, DPT and QKB, for round ***59,814 citizens and businesses*** (assets registration, social insurance, health card, registration business, civil status and taxes). During 2017, the total number of applications received at the reception counters was***31,603*** applications, and ***11,749*** persons were present at the information desk.

- 2) ***ADISA Fier Integrated Center- 339*** services of ***8*** icentral and local level institutions in ***23*** reception counters, respectively FSDKSH, IPRO, ISSH, GDT, QKB, NES, Local Taxes and Agricultural Land Registry Directorate, for about ***120,655 citizens and businesses*** (asset registration services, social security, health card, business registration, employment services, local taxes and levies, agricultural land registration). During 2017, ***44,652*** applications were compiled and received at the reception counters***16,266*** persons were presented at the information desk.

- 3) ***Integrated ADISA Gjirokastra Center -334*** services if ***6*** public institutions in***21*** reception counters, namely FSDKSH, IPRO, ISSH, GDC, DPT and GCK, for about ***28,673 citizens and businesses*** (asset registration services, social security, health card, business registration, civil status and taxes) During 2017, the total number of applications submitted to the reception counters was***25,549*** while***5,664*** persons were present at the information desk.

The following graphs show the number of applications submitted and requests for information from citizens received at the reception counters ADISA at LIPRO Tirana and the Integrated Services Provision Centers in Kavaja, Kruja, Fier and Gjirokastra:

Graph 10: The number of applications filed for information requests	Graph 11: Number of requests for information services
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To the effect of implementing the Memorandum of Understanding no 1013, dated 10.10.2017, entered into between TDG - ADISA - EBRD, there has been agreed to establish an information platform for taxpayers in Albania, with particular emphasis on informing micro, small and medium businesses on the obligations and rights deriving from tax legislation in Albania.

In order to increase the access and information of citizens about more than **500** public services, ADISA has created the “*ADISA Mobile App*” providing detailed information on the Information Cards, as well as enabling online ticket booking for service at the counters ADISA at LIPRO Tirana. During this period, the application was launched on the AppStore and Playstore for testing its functionality.

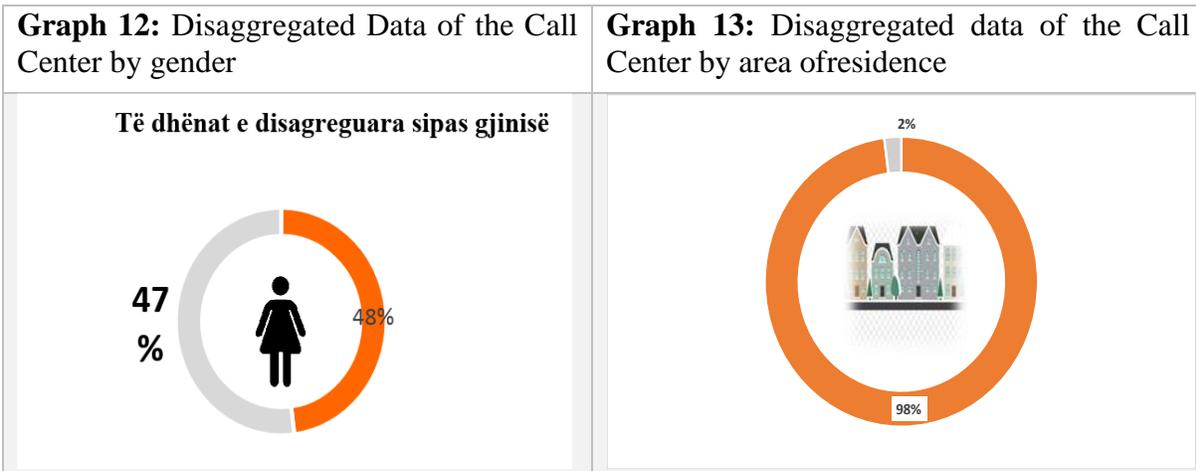


Figure 1 - Main interface and ADISA mobile application modules

The number of services and institutions for which information is provided through the Prepared Information Cards has been increased, going to **496** services of **17** public institutions related to areas such as property, transport, licensing, civil registry, registration of businesses, etc.²⁹. During the period January-December 2017 about **4,088** citizens were informed (of which 4 out of 5 are fully

²⁹ respectively: ABSA, ALUIZNI, AQTN, ATP, AZHT, DPB, DPD, DPGJC, DPP, DPSHTRR, DPT, FSDKSH, ISSH, MASR, MZHU, QKB, QSHA, SHSSH and ZRPP.

informed). From the monitored data it turns out that the number of calls made by men and women is roughly the same, ie **47%** of calls by women and **53%** of calls by males. Almost all calls were made from urban areas, i.e., **98%** of calls from urban areas and **2%** from rural areas. Citizens are mostly informed about the Call Center ADISA by online channels, respectively **55%** of them. Meanwhile 4 out of 10 citizens are regular callers.



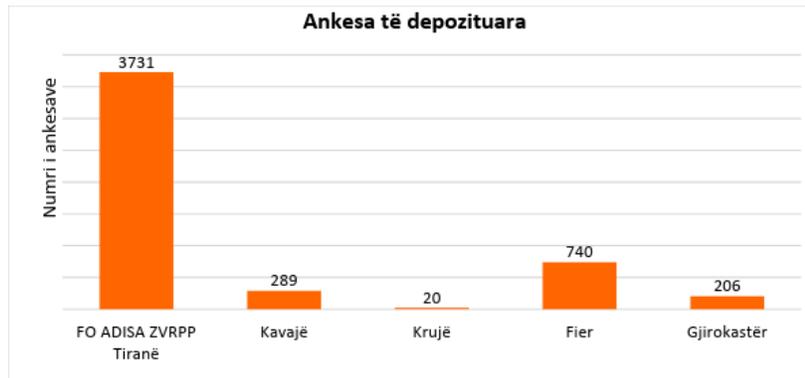
In all Integrated Centers, ADISA has established ***an improved service delivery standard, based on the principles of civic care***, particularly those related to:

- Ensuring an adequate working environment at the Reception Offices and providing ongoing training for the staff of these Offices;
- Provision of One Stop Shops and Tirana Reception Office with necessary signalling and parking facilities, including children's facilities;
- Setting Up a Queue Management System and providing for sitting facilities whole on queue;
- Establishing an Appeals Management System (AMS);
- Providing with the infrastructure necessary to enable people with disabilities to have access (e.g., ramp installation, dedicated toilets, etc.);
- Performance monitoring in service delivery.

The complaint management system is a novelty and a mechanism by which citizens can express their dissatisfaction with the services provided by the institutions providing services at the ADISA reception counters such as: ZRPP, ISSH, FSDKSH, DPGJC, DPT and / or in relation to service assistants under the ADISA. This system makes it possible to register and manage the complaints submitted by the citizens to the Integrated Centers ADISA. With the opening of the three Integrated Centers in Kruja, Fier and Gjirokastra, it was made possible through this system to preserve all the main details of a complaint for all institutions that are part of these Centers. During 2017 **3,731** complaints were filed for LIPRO Tirana, **289** complaints for institutions in the Integrated Kavaja Center, **20** complaints for institutions in the Integrated Kruja Center, **740** complaints for institutions at Fier Integrated Center and **206** complaints for institutions at the Integrated Gjirokastra

The graphical presentation of complaints hereunder being lodged at the Appeal counter for the institutions of FO, ADISA, LIPRO Tirana and the Integrated Centers ADISA:

Graph 14 - Number of complaints filed at ADISA reception counters



In order to modernize and improve public services through an innovative and citizen-centered approach, developing new ideas and solutions based on the needs of all citizens and businesses in Albania, by Order no 1118, dated 16.11.2017 “*On setting up the working group in the context of ADISA Innovation Lab project (ADISALab)*”, the first structure of this kind was set up in the Republic of Albania. During this year, ADISALab has developed the following activities:

- Creating the logo and opening the official website of ADISALab, respectively: - <http://lab.adisa.gov.al>;
- Organization of periodic meetings with team members and determination of objectives to be accomplished, namely:
 - i. **Mobile units:** bringing public services closer to each and every citizen by providing access to services for rural areas;
 - ii. **ADISA Mobile application:** bringing public services into the hands of citizens, providing citizens with information on the services provided and creating the opportunity to book a ticket for services in our centers - anywhere and at any time.

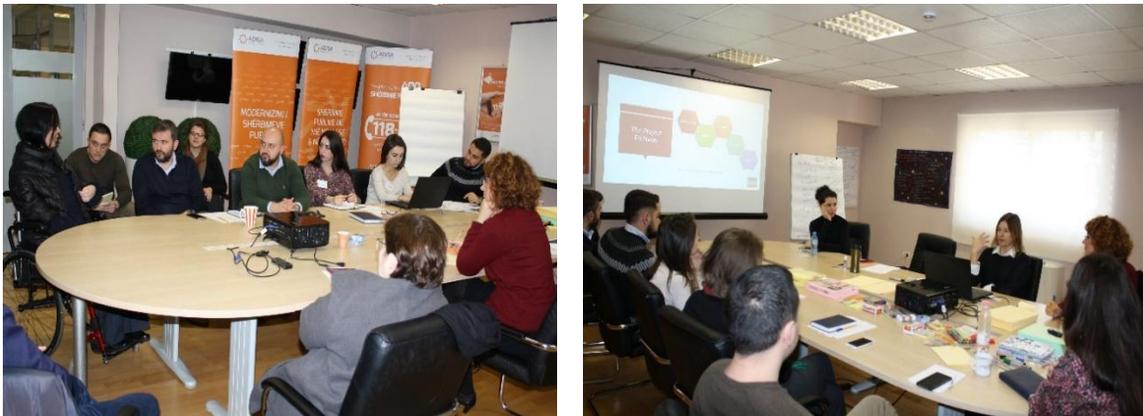
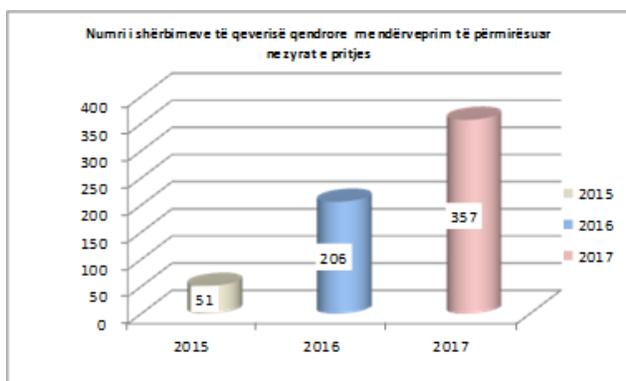


Figure 2 - ADISA Innovation Lab

Indicator 5a.

Value 2017

Number of central government services with improved interaction in reception offices 357



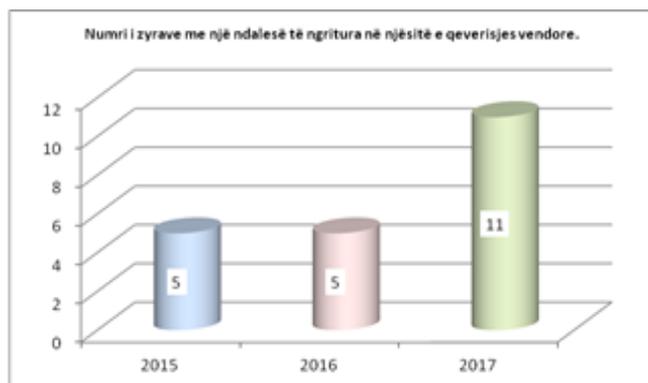
The value of the following indicator has gone through a 2-fold increase as the number of one-stop-shop offices in the local government units has increased from 5 in 2016 to 11 municipalities in 2017.

Indicator 5b.

Value 2017

Number of one-stop-shops established in local government units

11 municipalities



In addition to the achievements, during 2017 there were also challenges regarding the fulfilment of this objective, namely:

- *Budget Challenge* - lack of funds needed for the establishment of integrated centers;
- *Technical challenge* - difficulty in finding suitable premises for setting up centers;
- *Legislative Challenge* - Disapproval of legal and sub-legal acts for the passing of the counters of the institutions under focus, under the administration of ADISA.

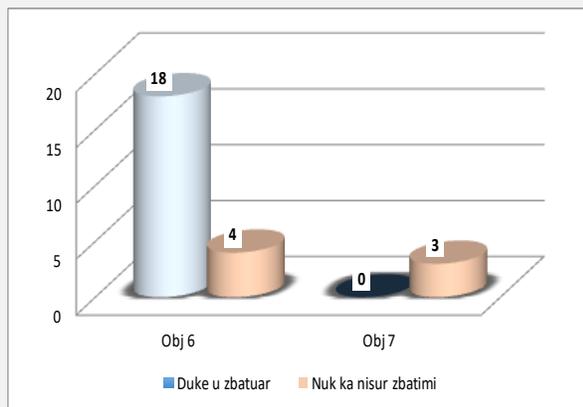
Pillar III ‘Civil service: Human Resource Management’

The objectives aim at:

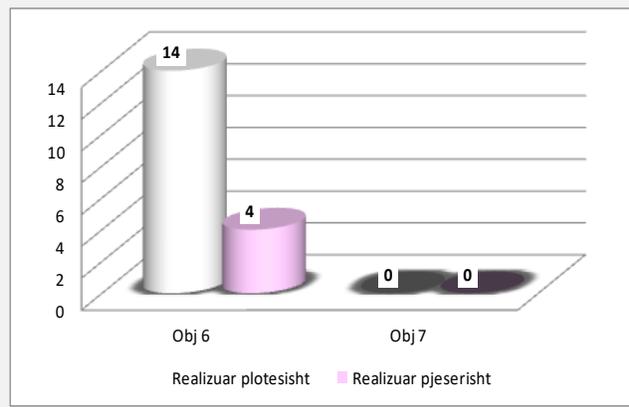
- ❖ *Improving the capacity for implementing civil service legislation and facilitating procedures for implementation;*
- ❖ *Organizing the civil service payroll system based on job evaluation, annual performance of civil servants and results in compulsory training*

As shown in the graphs below, 18 products out of 25 in total are beginning to be applied within this pillar. Of these products wherefore implementation has started, 14 of them have been fully implemented.

Graph 15: Number of products to be implemented according to Objectives



Graph 16: Status of product implementation according to Objectives



Progress towards each objective

Objectives 6: Enhanced capacity for the implementation of civil service legislation and facilitated procedures for implementation“. Out of 22 activities, 14 of them have been fully implemented.

Throughout 2017, in the context of implementation of public administration reform, the work focused on:

- > *Continuing to implement and ensure the rigorous implementation of legislation for Civil Servants in all state administration institutions through coordination with all HR units for the recognition, unification and oversight of all procedures for improving the performance of public administration;*

- > *Functional - structural reform of public administration institutions, with special focus on restructuring the Prime Minister's apparatus, line ministries and subordinate institutions;*
- > *Improving the legal framework;*
- > *Improving the selection and evaluation process of candidates competing to become part of the state administration;*
- > *Strengthening the capacity of the Department of Public Administration and human resources units in state administration institutions to advance civil service reform through ongoing training to understand human resource management policies, their linkages and their effects;*
- > *Further development of innovative methods to improve and facilitate communication and interaction between public institutions and citizens;*
- > *Continuous strengthening of ASPA as a provider of civil service training;*
- > *The SMISB / HRMIS extension to state administration institutions not part of the civil service, independent institutions and local government units, and the implementation of the wage module through HRMIS / HRMIS.*

Below are the concrete achievements of the objectives. ***In order to improve the recruitment process and meet the institutional needs, the Department of Public Administration, during 2017, undertook a series of measures in terms of:***

- > Enrichment and qualitative improvement of questions at the Bank of Questions;
- > Prepare a variety of orienting materials to help all potential applicants (video tutorials on how to apply, explanatory papers on frequently asked questions, etc.);
- > Training of Permanent Admissions Committee members on the methodology and accurate evaluation techniques of candidates;
- > Cooperation with higher education institutions with the aim of informing potential candidates (students and newly graduates) about employment opportunities in the state administration, etc.³⁰

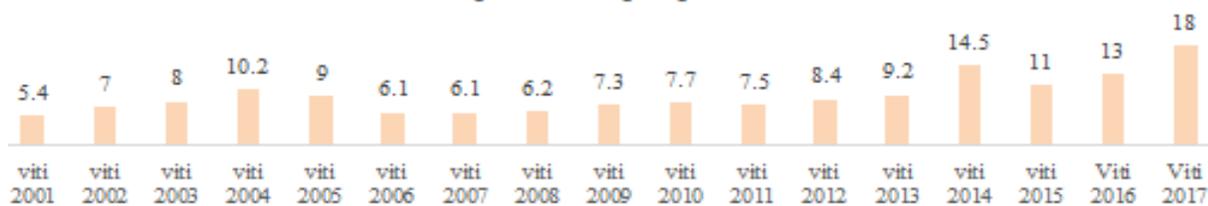
During 2017, work has been done to ***improve the recruitment process in the civil service at all stages***, starting from the planning of vacancies, their grouping and announcement, the public's orientation on the correct manner of application and managing the recruitment process effectively, through the implementation of innovative methods.

During this year, due to the conduct of general political elections and then the reformation of the cabinet, the Department of Public Administration announced recruitment procedures for a period of four months only. As a result, all data related to this process are for a shorter period than previous years. 242 competition procedures were conducted for 481 executive, lower and middle management

³⁰ On May 16-29, 2017, PAD representatives in cooperation with Twinning project representatives visited 17 faculties in 6 cities of Albania, where they presented the recruitment process and how to apply for 1500 participating students.

positions. The average number of candidates for a position for 2017 is estimated to be **18**. As can be seen from the chart below, the average number of applicants per position has increased compared to previous years, indicating an increasing interest in becoming part of the civil service.

Numri mesatar i aplikantëve për periudhën 2001 - 2017



Concrete steps have been taken to enable the generation of salaries of administrative staff through HRMIS, a process that is being piloted in **30** state institutions. **Also, the Human Resources Information Management System (HRMIS) has further enriched data from public administration institutions**, independent institutions and local government units, enabling more than **550** institutions to be put into the system and information to be made available for more than **45,000** employees.

In addition, during 2017, **more than 270 staff** members of the human resources sector, including local government units, as well as the units of the Regional Education Directorates and Education Offices throughout the country were trained, developing **over 30 training sessions** focused on structures, and the laying of individual employee records.

The salary module was developed³¹ and upgraded through the Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS), **which will set a new standard in calculating the salaries of all employees in the public administration**. The system was introduced to about **350** finance sector employees in various state institutions. During the last 3 months of 2017, piloting and testing of pay generation for the first group of nearly 30 independent and civil service institutions began.

For the first time, the assessment of knowledge for civil servants in positions with inspection functions was realized. The Department of Public Administration in the framework of human resources assessment in public administration developed an assessment procedure for updating and gaining additional knowledge for over **1,300** civil servants in positions with inspection functions. The process showed that the capacities in this field were average and raised the need to increase these capacities through dedicated training in this area.

Work has been done to enforce final judicial decisions. Also, the institutions are supported by the Department of Public Administration for a clearer understanding of the order no. 5151/2015, and as a result of the rigorous implementation of the rules and modalities to be followed by the state administration institutions for the implementation of these decisions.

As a result of the work done, during the year 2017 a total of 46 final judicial decisions were implemented, marking an increase of 43.75% compared to 2016 and an increase of 31.3% of the indicator of implementation of all judicial decisions carried forward since the end of 2013.

For 2017, it is worth mentioning information campaigns dedicated to increasing public information on public administration reform and concrete employment opportunities. During May 16-29, 2017, DoPa representatives in cooperation with representatives of the Twinning Project visited 17 faculties in 6 cities of Albania³² where they presented the recruitment process and the application method for 1500 participating students. In these meetings were also distributed a number of information materials prepared by DAP and the project³³



In addition to the information campaign at various universities in the country, a video was published on the recruitment process as well as a video on public administration reform and changes over the years to make the process clearer for all citizens³⁴.



³² This program included:

- City of Tirana: Faculty of Economics (400 students), Faculty of Social Sciences (200 students), Faculty of Law (200 students);
- The city of Durres: University "Aleksandër Moisiu", Faculty of Business, Faculty of Political Science - Juridical (200 students);
- The city of Vlora: University "Ismail Qemali", Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Technical Sciences;
- The city of Shkodra: Luigj Gurakuqi University (100 students);
- City of Korca, "Fan S Noli" University (100 students);
- City of Elbasan, "Aleksandër Xhuvani" University (200 students).

³³ Over 1500 leaflets explaining the recruitment process; Over 1500 leaflets on the role of the Department of Public Administration; Over 1200 leaflets featuring vacancies profile for 2017.

³⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTsYw7C4kzg&t=4s>

Among other things, in cooperation with the twinning project IPA 2012, "Support to civil service reform", a series of important guidelines, catalogues and manuals were prepared³⁵.



Also, the Department of Public Administration prepared a number of video tutorials aiming at explaining application procedures in the civil service, in order to increase public transparency and make available the materials and guidelines needed to create an account on the DoPA official website, on loading the documentation and application details³⁶.



Cooperation between the Department of Public Administration and the Commissioner for Civil Service Oversight has continued, which during the reporting period the oversight process has been

³⁵ The materials produced can be accessed through the official website of the Department of Public Administration: <http://dap.gov.al/projekte/materialeper-nepunesin-civil>.

³⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkD4DptuL18&t=22s>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-V0k8XSTpQ>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkD4DptuL18>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9TXbuxA_Q

conducted for all recruitment procedures for 2017 at executive levels as well as lateral and promotion transfers.

The Commissioner appreciates the implementation of law no 152/2013 "On Civil Servants".

The Commissioner for Civil Service Surveillance has, based on the results, supervised 12 central state administration institutions³⁷. Regarding the level of execution of the Commissioner's decisions, it turns out that in the institutions for which the process of verifying the implementation of the warning decision has been completed, in 58 cases (or 88% of them), the recommendations of the Commissioner have been fully implemented (29 state administration institutions (or 50% of cases) and 29 local government units (or 50% of cases)), and in 8 cases (or 12% of them), the recommendations of the Commissioner have been partially implemented (two institutions state administration (or 25% of cases) and 6 local government units (or 75% of cases)). During 2017, the difficulties or challenges of the Commissioner for Civil Service Surveillance in achieving the objectives were related to limited human and logistic resources.

ASPAs activity during 2017 has had the main goal of preparing Albanian public administration in the challenge of European integration and implementation of civil service legislation. In recent years, there has been a continuous improvement of the vocational training system in Albania, from the point of view of content in the development of qualitative curricula, with 104 training modules, as well as in terms of development and quality control of training. As a result, the year 2017 marked a higher performance.

Indicators on trained civil servants, training days, training courses

The number of training days for civil servants as well as the variety of training topics compared to previous years have increased. In this context we can mention that the ***average amount of training hours for civil servants has almost doubled*** from 25 hours in 2016 to 40 hours of training in 2017.

More specifically, below are shown in the table the indicators related to the number of trained civil servants, days and training courses for 2017, as well as graphically the same data for comparison effect for the years 2013-2017.

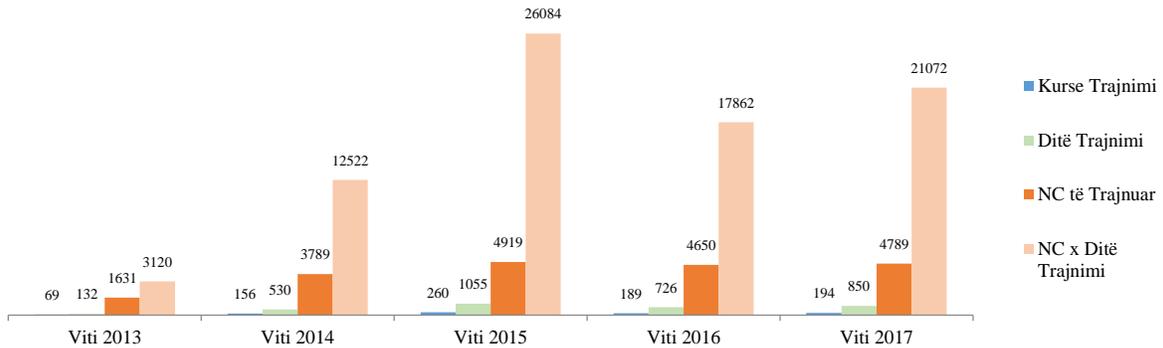
Indicators for 2017:

<i>Indicator</i>	Value 2017
Civil Servants participating in trainings	4,789
Training courses	194

³⁷ (Of which 11 line ministers and the Prime Minister); 39 municipalities and 220 former municipalities, now Administrative Unit, part of the municipal structure, 1 District Council; as well as 25 subordinate institutions, among which are 9 Regional Education Directorates (and 17 Educational Offices); 5 Agriculture Directorate, 6 Prefectures of the County and 5 different dependence institutions that in total include 2,803 job positions part of the civil service

Training days	850
Civil Servants participating in training days	21,072

Statistika të trajnimit për periudhën 2013 - 2017

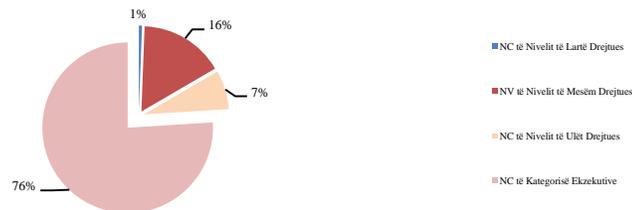


Among the civil servants trained during 2017:

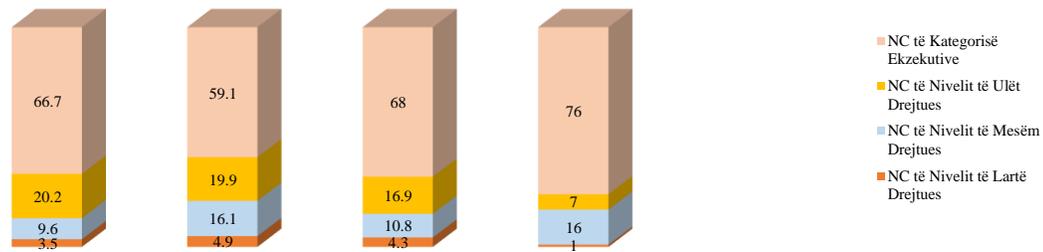
- 1% belong to the top management category;
- 16% belong to the middle management category;
- 7% belong to the low management category;
- 76% belong to the executive category.

The graph below shows, for comparison purposes, the data of trained civil servants divided by categories of civil servants, according to target groups, for: (i) 2017 and 2014 to 2017. The data is presented in percentages on the total number of trained staff.

Grupet e synuara për vitin 2017



Krahasimi/Grupet e synuara për vitet 2014- 2017



Indicators related to training management have continued to improve both quantitatively and in particular in quality by implementing standards of quality control and management of curricula and increasing the number of days of average training for a civil servant through drafting, the organization and development of long-term training programs.

In order to increase the quality of training and to have a qualitative curriculum in line with standards and training development methodology (implementation of innovative methods), ASPA has used the e-learning platform as a new training methodology that is accessible on its official site. During 2017 this course was attended by 494 participants at the central level and 771 civil servants at the local level.

ASPA during 2017 has consolidated the digital library³⁸ by enriching it with the curricula for central and local government. Also "Quality Assessment Methodology, based on standards and criteria" was consolidated. During 2017, 76 curricula in e-book store were published. Curriculum subject-related topics and relevant manuals are offered to upgrade the quality assessment system (SVC) in advance. For this process, around 28 experts from different fields were engaged for evaluating the quality of the curricula.

Among other things, during 2017, measurement of the impact of training³⁹ on the performance of the civil servant was performed. The impact assessment was carried out for trainings in the framework of capacity building for the harmonization of Albania's economic and trade legislation with EU acts, for the implementation of harmonized legislation, and preparation of public administration for the development of EU membership negotiations -in.

Indicator 6a.	Value 2017
The annual transferred (lateral transfer) of management level staff at all levels of civil service in central administration institutions	n/a

³⁸ The digital library is an intelligent system built on the official website that manages the management of all the training curricula used by the Albanian School of Public Administration for the training of civil servants and other budget employees.

³⁹ From the data analysis it turned out that: (i) 82% of participants estimate that the skills acquired by the trainees were needed and demonstrated success in the way the training was prepared and developed; (ii) The trainings achieved their goal through the combination of theoretical formation with the practical exercise of acquired skills and the use of skills acquired at the workplace, most of the interviewed respondents have found the space.

This indicator is calculated by dividing the number of managerial staff at all levels of civil service in central administration institutions that have been removed from their positions in one year / divided by the total number of management staff in the central administration for the given year. Due to the methodology of estimating and changes occurring in the second half of 2017 (restructuring ministries), the new number of positions in the civil service, which is different in the second half of the year compared to the first half, makes it impossible to measure this value correctly and compare it over the years.

<i>Indicator 6b 1.</i>	Value 2017
The average number of participants from outside the civil service participating in a recruitment procedure	9, 9 ⁴⁰

<i>Indicator 6b 2</i>	Value 2017
The average number of participants within the civil service participating in a recruitment procedure	1.37 ⁴¹

For the two above indicators, although in absolute terms is marked a small decrease, we should bear in mind that during recruitment procedures for a very short period of time (only 4 months) were developed during 2017. As a result, all data related to this process are for a shorter period than previous years.

On 1 June 2017, the Council of Ministers adopted Decision no 473, dated 01/06/2017, *"Taking measures and monitoring the activity, behavior or use of human, financial and logistical resources of the state administration during the electoral process in the Albanian Parliament for 2017"*. The purpose of this decision and the establishment of the Task Force, including government representatives, including technical ministers and the technical Deputy Prime Minister, was monitoring and preventing the use of human, financial and logistical resources of the state administration during the electoral campaign period. It is worth pointing out that during this period there were a number of difficulties and problems in civil service management that were reflected in the overcoming of competencies by technical ministers, intervening in civil service management by issuing orders to suspend General Secretaries and General Directors, which is in conflict with the civil service legislation.

Under these conditions, the Public Administration Department suspended vacancy announcements, a suspension that lasted even after the completion of the elections due to cabinet reform and the process of adopting structures and organs of new ministries. We point out here that new vacancy announcements were suspended, rather than recruitment procedures for vacancies that were previously announced.

⁴⁰ Reduction marked by only 0.1

⁴¹ Reduction marked by only 0.3

Under these conditions, it should be noted that the Department of Public Administration for 2017 announced recruitment procedures only for a period of four months. As a result, all data related to this process are for a shorter period than previous years.

As for the following indicator 6c, for 2017 this value is 0, as opposed to 1 appeal received by the court on recruitment issues in the previous reporting period (2016).

<i>Indicator 6c.</i>	Value 2017
The number of complaints pertaining to civil service recruitment received by the court (starting from the second half of 2014) has declined	0

Starting from the 0 or 1 values of this indicator over the years, it is suggested to revise it and formulate another indicator which will more accurately measure what is to be achieved under this target.

The value of the following indicator continued to remain constant referring to SIGMA 2015 estimate.

<i>Indicator 6d.</i>	Value 2017
The extent to which the civil servants training system is functional and implemented in practice (SIGMA Indicator).	3

This indicator has not changed compared to its level of 2016. ⁴²

Referring to the **Objective 7 "Organizing the civil service payroll system based on job evaluation, annual performance of civil servants and compulsory training outcomes"** there are envisaged 3 products for which it is envisaged to start implementing after the launch of the IPA 2014 Project "Enforcing Civil Service Reform in Public Administration".

<i>Indicator 7a.</i>	Value 2017
Balancing the payroll system and achieving the ratio of 22.1 in 2020 between maximum and minimum wage.	8.6%

<i>Indicator 7b.</i>	Value 2017
Increase of the variation / number of positions in the salary scheme based on job description	0

⁴² See OECD / SIGMA Evaluation Report 2017 "Principles of Public Administration" p. 63

One of the important objectives of the civil service reform and the Strategy itself is Organizing the civil service payroll system based on job evaluation, annual performance of civil servants and results in compulsory training (Objective 7). The IPA 2014 Project *"Supporting the Implementation of Civil Service Reform in Public Administration"* will support the administration in implementing the measures envisaged for this Objective. The project has not yet started and is expected to begin within the third quarter of 2018. The values of both indicators remain the same as in 2016.

<i>Indicator 7c.</i>	Value 2017
The extent to which the civil servants rewarding system is functional and transparent and is implemented in practice (SIGMA Indicator).	3

In the OECD / SIGMA assessment this indicator has dropped from level 4 to 2015 at level 3 in 2017. According to this assessment, *"vertical promotion and salary growth remain the only ways to improve payroll conditions"* and the changes made in Albanian legislation are not yet providing a coherent salary system. In order to address this situation in the framework of IPA assistance, a study will be conducted which will pave the way for improving the payroll system and reducing the gap with the private market.

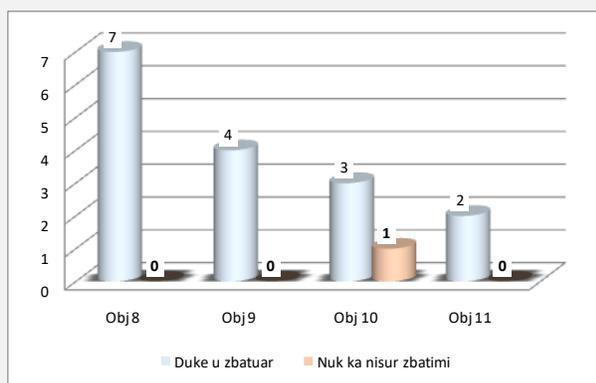
Pillar IV - Administrative Procedures and Oversight

The reforms envisaged under this field are oriented towards achieving the following four objectives:

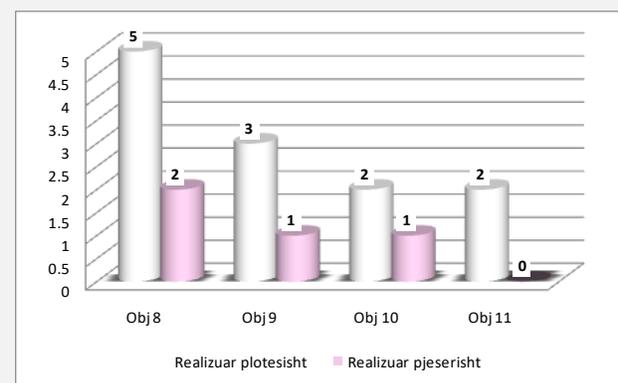
- ❖ *Implementing simplified procedures for providing services, facilitating public communication and avoiding corruption;*
- ❖ *Develop an ICT infrastructure capable of supporting the daily activities of public administration and increasing efficiency by reducing the time to access, process and transmit information while improving the flow of information;*
- ❖ *Increasing the efficiency and accountability of public servants;*
- ❖ *Intensifying the control over the activity of the public administration regarding the guarantee for the rights of citizens and access to information.*

This pillar contains 17 products out of which 16 have begun implementation.

Graph 17: Number of products to be implemented according to Objectives



Graph 18: Status of product implementation according to Objectives



Progress towards each objective

In the framework of **Objective 8 "Simplified procedures for service delivery, facilitating public communication and avoiding corruption"**, a total of 7 products have been foreseen, which have started implementation and have been fully implemented, whereby 5 thereof by the end of 2017 (marking an increase by one product compared to the previous reporting period).

In order to accomplish this objective, during the period January-December 2017 the implementation of the contract *"Re-engineering Process for the Integrated Public Service Delivery Center"* started for 400+ services provided by 10 public institutions. The aim is to reduce the time of service delivery by the relevant institutions by about 25% and significantly reduce the administrative burden for the

citizen. Also, this process is the starting point for the "government as a whole" principle and aims at eliminating the obligation of citizen / business to appear before public institutions, data contained in state databases / archives⁴³.

Indicator 8a.	Value 2017
Number of services with simplified procedures for their provision	0

Regarding the above indicator, the actual level for 2017 is 0 Consultation products for the re-engineering of public services of 10 focusing institutions, respectively 382 new mapping processes, have been approved by the institutions concerned, and is expected to be approved by the Council of Ministers. *Achievements towards the level of the objective for 2017⁴⁴ are consequently at 0%.*

Implementing of the Deregulation Reform, which aims at improving public services by reducing the number of documents and their online passage, ADISA has begun the process of preparing an overview of the information sent by some ministries⁴⁵. ADISA's work group has prepared an overview of relevant services, documents that are eliminated or integrated, service code, service level, and comparison with ADISA's recommendations from the re-engineering consultant for the re-engineering of public services.

In order to ensure quality and access to the delivery of public services, and to enable a unified citizen experience in the process of delivering public services, **ADISA has standardized a total of 128 forms for 301 public services** for some institutions⁴⁶, and has compiled a total of 562 Public Service Information Cards⁴⁷

with the purpose of informing the citizens on the manner of application, documents required for application, tariffs, deadlines, etc.

The level of citizen satisfaction in terms of service delivery has increased considerably. Polls were conducted to measure civic satisfaction at the reception counters ADISA at LIPRO Tirana and at the Integrated Service Provision Center in Kavajë with the aim of informing citizens about the application method, the required application documents, tariffs, deadlines, etc. Two surveys were conducted to measure citizen satisfaction at the reception desk of the IPRO Tirana, respectively in February and July 2017. Generally, respondents evaluated ***more than 90% positively*** the changes made by ADISA. From data analysis, there is a notable increase in the level of civic satisfaction in all the indicators analyzed with the period before the opening of the reception offices. Also, from

⁴³ All public administrative services, defined by Law no. 13/2016, dated 18.02.2016, were analysed based on the four main steps of the service: (i) Prepare to receive the service; (ii). Application (at the reception desk or online); (iii) Processing in processing offices; (iv). Delivery channel.

⁴⁴ The target level for 2017 is 150 maps produced and approved by the Council of Ministers (referred to in the Passport of Indicators, p. 24).

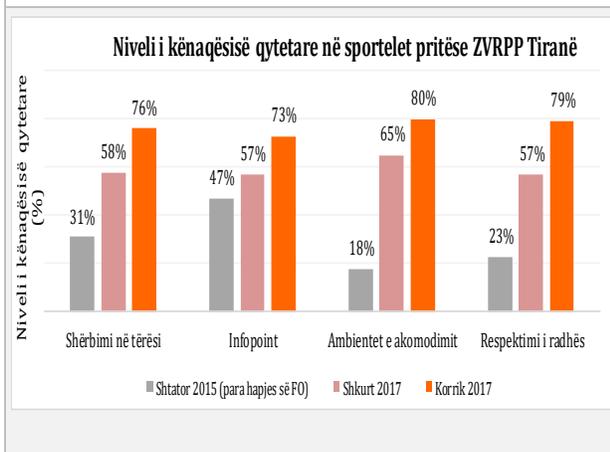
⁴⁵ Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Ministry of finance and Economy, Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Ministry of Interior, and the dependant institutions

⁴⁶ AQTN, ATP, DPD, DPB, DPGJC, DPSHTRR, ISSH, MSHMS, SHSSH, QSHA, ZRPP, DPT, ALUIZNI, SHKP, QKB, FSDKSH dhe MASR

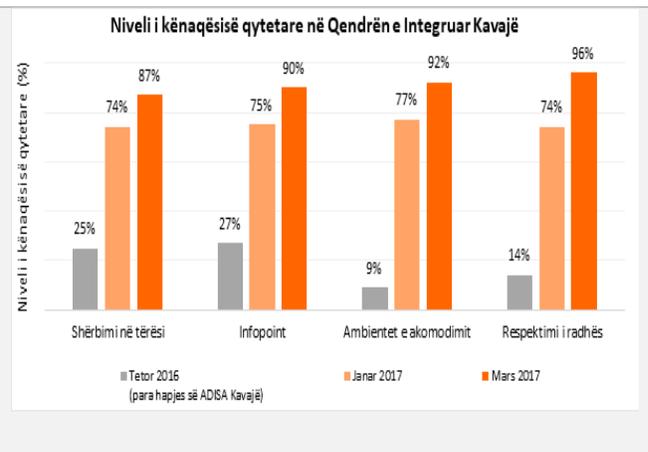
⁴⁷ ATP, AQTN, ABSA, DPD, DPB, DPSHTRR, DPGJC, MASR, FSDKSH, ISSH, QKB, ZRPP, SHSSH, SHKP, MZHU, AZHT, DPT, ALUIZNI, DPP dhe QSHA

February to July there is a significant improvement in the level of civic satisfaction. The graph below shows the improvement of the civic satisfaction level according to various indicators for measuring the performance for "very satisfied":

Graph 19: The level of civic satisfaction at the reception desk of LIPRO Tirana



Graph 20: The level of civic satisfaction at the reception desk of Integrated Centre in Kavaja



During 2017, two surveys were conducted to measure citizen satisfaction at ADISA Kavajë Integrated Center, respectively in January and March 2017. Generally, respondents rated more than 95% positively the changes made by ADISA. From data analysis, there is a noticeable increase in the level of civic satisfaction in all the indicators analyzed with the period before the opening of the reception offices. Also, from January to March there is a significant improvement in the level of civic satisfaction. The graph below shows the improvement of the civic satisfaction level according to various indicators for measuring the performance for "very satisfied":

Also, online surveys were conducted by open voting for all citizens on the ADISA official website through the question "How do you assess the changes made by ADISA to service delivery quality?" For FO ADISA LIPRO Tirana and Integrated Centers in Kavaja, Krujë, Fier and Gjirokastra. In general, the level of online estimates is high. The most appreciated are the changes made at the Integrated Centers Fier and Gjirokastra.

Given the above-mentioned analysis of citizen satisfaction measurement at reception offices at IPRO Tirana and the Integrated Center in Kavaja, as well as the results of online surveys, this indicator is **increasing** in relation to the periods before the opening of the Integrated Centers ADISA and the respective months in which surveys were conducted during 2017.

Achievements towards the level of objectives for 2017⁴⁸ have been met.

⁴⁸ The target level for 2017 is a growing trend (referred to as Passport of Indicators, p. 25).

Indicator 8b.	Value 2017
Public satisfaction level (%) versus quality of service delivery	Tendency upwards

Referring to the Passport of Indicators, the target level for 2017 is a growing. It can not be measured at a general value because polls refer to different time periods and service counters of different institutions. During the surveys conducted at LIPRO Tirana, the level of civic satisfaction tends to increase from the **level of 31% before the opening of the counters, at 58% in February 2017 and 76% in July 2017** (Graph 19). During the surveys conducted at the Integrated Centre Kavaje, the level of civic satisfaction tends to increase from the level of 25% before the opening of the counters, at 74% in January 2017 and 87% in March 2017 (Graph 20).

Indicator 8c.	Value 2017
The extent to which policies for providing citizen-focused services have been adopted and implemented in practice	3

This indicator has increased compared to the 2015 estimate, which level was 2. The OECD / SIGMA⁴⁹ assessment report assesses the policies undertaken by the Government and approval a range of policy documents and legislation related to providing services to citizens.

Undoubtedly, beyond the elements of success, there have been some challenges that we faced in 2017, in view of meeting this objective, such as:

- > *Budget Challenge* - non-allocation of funds needed for ICT infrastructure to accommodate relevant recommendations;
- > *Technical challenge* - lack of validation of information by institutions;
- > *Legislative Challenge* - Non-approval of sub-legal act for implementation in the process of re-engineering the public services.

As regards **Objective 9 "Developing an ICT infrastructure capable of supporting the daily activities of the public administration and increasing efficiency by reducing the time to access, process and transmit information while improving the flow of information"** have started implementing 4 anticipated products in total, as well as 3 of them have been fully realized.

During 2017, in pursuit of this objective below we will briefly mention some of the concrete achievements for the reporting period:

E-Albania's unique government portal has provided around 527 electronic services and 151,439 new users are registered and in total since 2013, 391,060 registered users are counted. Of the

⁴⁹ See OECD / SIGMA Evaluation Report 2017 "Principles of Public Administration" p. 108

registered users for this reporting period, 3% of them belong to the business profile and 97% of the registered belong to the citizen profile.

Also in the *Intergovernmental Interaction Platform*, five other institutions were connected to exchange data in real time, increasing the total number of related institutions to **47**. This link makes it possible to communicate and exchange data among different institutions, creating the possibility of providing more electronic services to citizens, businesses and the government itself.

During 2017 there was an increase to over 1,000,000 transactions compared to 2016 of the number of transactions executed on the platform amounting to **26,624,830 transactions**.

Facilitating access to citizens and businesses in electronic services there was undertaken an important initiative provided by e-Albania's unique e-Albania portal, which was a **digital stamp and a public administration module** for issuing administrative documents to the citizen. The e-Albania portal is used by public administration employees to obtain certificates and documents which are used as portal services (with digital stamp) for filling in the accompanying documentation of the service requested by the citizen. These documents are no longer required of the citizen when receiving a public service.

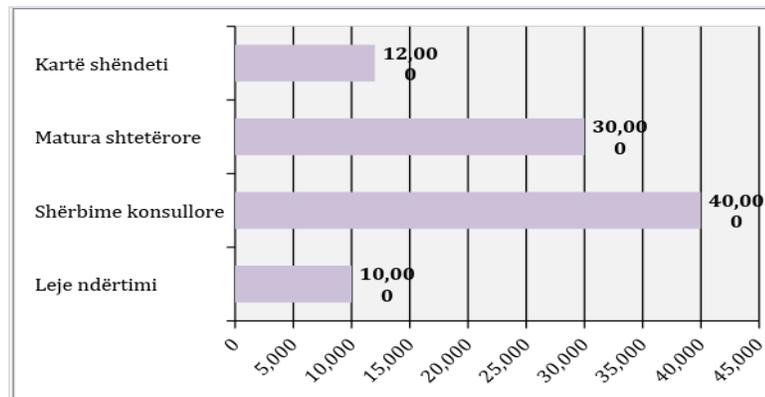
By the end of 2017, there are **29** stamped documents provided in the module for public administration employees dealing with service delivery procedures to citizens in order to improve the availability, quality and transparency of public services and reduce implementation time procedures and costs of public administration. By the end of 2017, a total of 102 institutions and 4,720 users were enrolled in the module.

Among the most used services of 2017 are applications for construction permits, which count over 10,000 applications, applications for consular services for overseas Albanians counting over 40,000 applications, e-service for state matura which enabled over 30,000 successful applications for graduates, or over 12,000 health card applications. Digital-provided services have also been widely used especially after September 2017.

Civil status certificates, seven certificates from the General Directorate of Taxes, pension certificates, health cards, etc., are among the most downloaded documents from the portal.

- **279,906** civil status certificates generated from the e-Albania portal;
- **13,995,300** new ALL savings to citizens;
- **74,928** tax certificates;
- **18,723** hours of waiting in the queue or two years and two months and avoiding other bureaucratic actions that would bring other business costs (averaging 15 minutes wait for a certificate).

Graph 22: The most used services in 2017



* Compared to last year, the value of indicator 9a. remains the same.

Indicator 9a.	Value 2017
Improved IT service delivery systems	4

Indicator 9b.	Value 2017
The extent to which the political and administrative prerequisites for the provision of electronic services (SIGMA Indicator) are applicable.	Increasing tendency

With regard to **Objective 10 "Increasing the efficiency and accountability of public servants"**, a total of 4 activities have been envisaged, of which 3 have been implemented by the end of 2017. From among these, two activities, for which implementation has started, are fully implemented.

Indicator 10a.	Value 2017
The extent to which the legal framework for the good administration was approved and implemented in practice (SIGMA Indicator).	3

This indicator has improved compared to the 2015 measurement, which was at level 2. This assessment is mainly related to the adoption of the new Code of Administrative Procedures and the adoption of a set of standard service delivery procedures.

With regard to **Objective 11 "Enhancing control over public administration activity, guaranteeing citizens' rights and access to information"**, a total of 2 activities have been envisaged that have started implementation and have been fully implemented in 2017.

The Commissioner Office has, over the year 2017, proceeded with its efforts for implementing and monitoring the law no 119/2014 "*On the right to information*", which is carried out through monitoring various elements of the law, such as the number of public authorities that have drafted transparency programs, coordinators appointed by public authorities, updating the register of requests and responses, the number of complaints reviewed, the investigations carried out, the hearings conducted and the decisions rendered.

The Commissioner Office has, during 2017, not only monitored the official websites of the Public Authorities, but it carried out inspections on the ground, while seeking information regarding the performance of obligations emerging out of the law no 119/2014, such as:

- *Publication of transparency programs;*
- *Appointment of the Coordinator on the Right to Information;*
- *Publication of the claims and responses register.*

The monitoring of public authorities has resulted that **181** public authorities have approved and have made public the transparency program; **227** public authorities have assigned a right-of-way coordinator and **124** Public Authorities have published a register of requests and responses.

From the monitoring of public authorities for 2017 it has been shown that institutions that have a full and updated program of transparency are independent institutions. Also, independent institutions have the same coordinators they have appointed since the entry into force of the Law No.119 / 2014 "*On the Right to Information*". The number of requests for information dealt with by these institutions during 2017 is 1303, while the number of rejected applications is 98.

Regarding local government, the Commissioner's Office estimates that the level of municipal transparency is improving. Already all municipalities have appointed the coordinators for the right to information and the number of requests for public information handled by municipalities during 2017 is **9308**, while the number of rejected requests is **245**.

More problematic the transparency situation has been for the central government institutions. Although there were significant improvements in the first six months of 2017, referring to the monitoring that all ministries had appointed coordinators for the right to information and transparency programs, this situation changed after June due to electoral elections and change cabinet government. The changes consisted of a number of ministries as well as in the areas of competencies of each ministry. Consequently, there was a noticeable deterioration in the performance of the obligations deriving from the Law "On the Right to Information". In some ministries there was a replacement of the coordinators of the right to information, on the websites of the new ministries there was a fictitious icon for the transparency program.

During 2017, co-ordinators of the right to information in the ministries dealt with a total of 417 requests for public information and only 3 of them were rejected.

In implementing the Law No 119 / 2014 "On the Right to Information" during 2017, **560** complaints were filed with the Office of the Commissioner, out of which **395** were solved by mediation. For 66 complaints, the Commissioner has rendered a "**Decision**". Further on, 77 complaints emerged to be off the scope. **8** complaints have been beyond the time period and **14** complaints have been incomplete.

The fact that the bulk of the complaints have been settled by mediation reflects the effectiveness of the intervention of the Commissioner Office. Most of the complaints being dealt with by the Commissioner Office were complaints being filed by the citizens. Specifically, **430** complaints were filed by citizens, while **130** complaints were filed by the Non-Profit Organization (NGO). The fact that the largest number of complaints come from citizens is a good indicator of the citizen's awareness of the right to information.

The commissioner office has carried out **94** administrative enquiries in the field of the right to information to the effect of verifying the deposited complaints. Also, 66 decisions were made by the Public Authorities, out of which 57 were orders of order, 3 quashing decisions, and 6 were sanctioning decisions. During this year, 10 hearings were conducted.

This year has continued cooperation with the Albanian School of Public Administration with the aim of strengthening the public administration capacities for the proper implementation of the law. The right to information has been part of the compulsory training program for civil servants during the probation period. 18 training courses were organized in which 555 civil servants participated.

For 2017, ***the number of complaints filed annually with the Commissioner has declined*** (indicator 11.a). As foreseen in the indicator passport from 684 complaints reviewed in 2016, in 2017 were reviewed 560 complaints.

Regarding the number of penalties applied by the Commissioner towards the institutions, which were carried out after the inspections on the basis of reporting, there have resulted that they did not provide information 0.06, whereas in 2016 this figure was 0.03.

One of the main challenges of the Office of the Commissioner is to increase the accountability of public authorities by increasing the control over public administration activity in guaranteeing citizens' rights and access to information.

<i>Indicator 11a.</i>	Value 2017
Number of complaints filed annually with the Commissioner responsible for freedom of information	560

During this period, the Ombudsperson Institution addressed a total of 188 recommendations to the public administration bodies, including central and local authorities. From the total number of recommendations it turns out that:

- 123 recommendations were upheld;
- 29 recommendations were rejected;
- 24 recommendations without response;
- 12 recommendations are pending.

As mentioned above, 123 recommendations are received by state bodies, of which **80 recommendations have been received and implemented, while 19 recommendations have been received but have not been implemented. Meanwhile, for 24 recommendations that were received by them**, the responsible institutions did not send information on the progress of their implementation.

Out of the number of recommendations addressed to a total of 188, it turns out that only 123 of the recommendations received and referred to the report of the recommendations received with the recommendations implemented, there emerges **that 65% of the recommendations received have been implemented by the relevant institutions.**

Regarding the unanswered recommendations, we note that 24 recommendations for 2017 result unanswered from state institutions. So, according to the report between the unanswered recommendations and the recommendations addressed in total by the Ombudsman, **it results that 12.7% of the recommendations addressed have no answer.**

Regarding the number of requests for information, it results that for 2017, the Ombudsperson Institution has addressed a total of **2015 requests for information**, out of which 60 of them are unanswered, or 2.9% of requests for information addressed do not have received responses from relevant institutions.

In conclusion, based on the analysis of the above statistics, there emerges for 2017 and it has been identified that there is an increase ***in the number of recommendations fully received by public administration institutions, as well as a percentage of increase of the recommendations implemented.*** Meanwhile, with regard to unanswered recommendations, there are fewer unanswered recommendations for 2017 compared with 2016. The following value increases, compared to 47.2% for 2016.

<i>Indicator 11b.</i>	Value 2017
Percentage of recommendations implemented by the supervisory institutions of the central government institutions over the past two years.	65%

I. Main Challenges for Implementing the Strategy in 2018

- ***In the 2016 Strategy Monitoring Report, the parliamentary election process was identified as one of the biggest challenges that could be faced with the implementation of the Strategy.*** The normal functioning of the administration could have potentially direct or indirect impacts as a result of the political situation in the country. Apart from the difficulties regarding electoral period, the appointment of some technical ministers and the heads of independent institutions as a result of the electoral situation, elements that had an impact on the pace of implementation of the Strategy, data show that compared to last year, there is ***an increase of 4% of the activities under implementation.*** With the formation of the new government cabinet and the restructuring of the central administration, institutions continued to work normally in most cases, continuing to report on the progress of the implementation of the Strategy.
- ***The drafting and adoption of the new Activity Plan to be implemented for the period 2018-2020,*** in pursuance of the Cross-Cutting Public Administration Reform 2015-2020, also providing financial needs within the Mid-Term Budget Program is one of the challenges of the year 2018. The New Action-Plan should be qualitative, ambitious, but achievable and above all it must be financially sustainable. In this context, the challenges encountered have been the slow response of some institutions regarding the proposals for new activities to be included in the new action plan.
- A challenge for the next three years remains the full realization of the reforms envisaged in the Strategy and above all the fulfilment of the objectives envisaged to have at the end of 2020 a Strategy that can be assessed as applied above its 80% level.
- Improvement of policy planning and coordination, enforcing regulatory impact assessment, improving public consultation process, enabling active and qualitative inclusion, de-regulation process or restructuring of agencies and dependent institutions in view of improvement service delivery, new salary structure, unification of procedures, full functionality of HRMIS, strengthening of ASPA capacities, etc. remain among the key challenges throughout 2018 and beyond.
- ***In conclusion, one of the challenges remains the sincere and open presentation of the problems encountered in implementing the strategies.*** This requires a change in the culture of work of the Albanian administration: the culture of analysis and identification of problems in the most objective way. In this context, positive steps were initially made in 2016 in the second monitoring report of the strategy which presented the challenges and potential risks. However, such an approach should be systematic and inclusive at all technical, managerial and political levels.

- ***Public administration reform should remain the focus and attention of all actors*** especially in view of Albania's expectation to open EU accession negotiations. The success of these negotiations is directly related to the professionalism and dedication of public administration employees both at central and local level.