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PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM STRATEGY 2022-2027

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List of abbreviations

IAP	Information and Privacy Agency
ERA	European Reforms Agenda
AIS	Agency for Information Society
LD	Legal Department
DMPO	Department for the Management of Public Officials
DPAR	Department for Public Administration Reform
SGPAR	Special Group for Public Administration Reform
OI	Ombudsperson Institution
EI	European Integrations
KIPA	Kosovo Institute of Public Administration
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
EC	European Commission
MCPAR	Ministerial Council for Public Administration Reform
IOBCSK	Independent Oversight Board for the Civil Service of Kosovo
LOFSAIA	Law on the Organization and Functioning of the State Administration and Independent Agencies
LGAP	Law on General Administrative Procedure
LSCS	Law on Salaries of Civil Servants
LSPS	Law on Salaries in the Public Sector
LSPL	Law on the System of Permits and Licenses
LPO	Law on Public Officials
MAP	former Ministry of Public Administration
HRM	Human Resource Management
MF	Ministry of Finance
MIET	Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
HRMU	Human Resources Management Unit
OECD/SIGMA	Organization for Cooperation and Development in Europe / SIGMA program
ERP	Economic Reforms Programme

NPISAA	National Program for Implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement
SOP	Strategic Operational Plan
AGWP	Annual Government Work Plan
PAR	Public Administration Reform
CS	Civil service
HRMIS	Human Resources Management Information System
GCS	Government Coordination Secretariat
NDP	National Development Plan
PAMS	Public Administration Modernization Strategy
SIPPC	Strategy for Improving Policy Planning and Coordination
PARS	Public Administration Reform Strategy
SBR	Strategy for Better Regulation
IT	Information Technology
AI	Administrative Instruction
LO	Legal Office
NAO	National Audit Office
SPO/OPM	Strategic Planning Office/Office of the Prime Minister

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public Administration Reform Strategy (PARS) 2022 - 2027 is a strategic document of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo that sets out objectives and guidelines for the development and modernization of public administration over the next five (5) years.

This Strategy is complemented by the first two-year action plan (2022 – 2024) that stipulates actions and goals for achieving strategic objectives, including projected cost. Based on the midterm assessment for this period, a new action plan will identify actions and objectives for the next two years, i.e. 2025 – 2027.

The document focuses on the responsibilities and administrative duties of the Government and the state administration under the leadership, control and supervision of the Government. This

involves any segment of state administration, affected by legislation (e.g. administrative procedures and service delivery, civil service system, access to information, public sector salary system, etc.). This document also targets such administrative duties and responsibilities, while recognizing the autonomy of local administration.

The vision of the PAR Strategy is a modern public administration that serves the public interest, meets the needs of citizens and businesses, and successfully completes the EU membership process, supporting democracy and the rule of law.

To achieve this vision, reforms and improvements are needed to ensure further democratization, economic development and successful membership of the Republic of Kosovo in international organizations, including in particular support for EU membership and the development of administrative capacities to perform successfully within the EU. For these purposes, the horizontal management systems in the public administration require changes and improvements, while the overall performance of the public administration must increase significantly.

The scope of PARS is summarized into 4 priority areas: (a) Policy Planning and Coordination; (b) Service delivery; (c) Public Service and Human Resource Management (HRM); (d) Accountability and transparency.

For each priority area, a general medium-term objective has been set that defines the main direction of reforms. The general objectives of the PARS are also strategic objectives, broken down within the Good Governance pillar of the National Development Strategy (NDS) 2030 which breaks down further with National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 and serve the implementation of the NDP. The experience and lessons learned from the implementation of the previous strategic framework of the PAR have also been used to validate the objectives of the PARS, therefore both bottom-up and top-down approaches have been applied in their determination.

Each general objective is aggregated into groups of specific objectives under the same priority area. Unlike the general objectives, the specific objectives of the PARS are usually defined for the short term and provide more specific expected results with the implementation of the required activities and actions.

The general and specific objectives of the PARS and their links to the strategic objectives of the NDP are illustrated below.

Table 1: Summary of PARS objectives



Government effectiveness: The planning and coordination of results-oriented policies will be among the main priorities of the Government, with the view of ensuring more effective governance through better planning, monitoring and supervision of the performance of the state administration. For this purpose, further support will be provided for the integration of policy and financial planning through additional measures. The integrated planning system will bring more accountability and enhance the efficient use of public resources. The overall performance of the state administration will be promoted and supported with the use of a performance management framework, focused on policy outcomes. Establishing and linking sectoral and institutional objectives with the National Development Objectives will also increase institutional accountability for its performance and results. Individual responsibility will be at a more elevated level, where institutional objectives will serve as an objective framework for determining individual performance objectives of civil servants, in a fair and impartial manner.

Improvement measures in policy development and the policy-making system aim to support a better policy and regulatory framework through informed government decision-making. This will be achieved, *inter alia*, through better implementation and quality control in the use of tools and techniques already introduced for analysis-based policy development (i.e. regulatory impact assessment, concept papers, etc.). Transparency and a participatory (consultative) approach to policy and legislative development will be increased, the availability of performance information to the public will be ensured, and the proactive communication policy of the government and its institutions will be implemented. All these measures will reduce the risks of corruption, increase external control over performance and ultimately strengthen security and public confidence in governance.

Better regulation and service delivery: The economic development of the country should not be affected by government regulations, therefore barriers and burdens for business should be reviewed, i.e. taken into account, and therefore lifted or reduced, while new obstacles should be prevented. Taxpayers, citizens and businesses deserve treatment and services of much higher standards and better protection of their rights against the voluntary or discretionary powers of the administration. The service-oriented administrative culture must evolve from the bureaucratic mindset and attitude.

The main innovations to support the efficiency and quality of the provision of administrative services are set in the new Government Program for the Prevention and Reduction of Administrative Burden 2022-2027. This Program is designed to address regulatory and administrative barriers that hinder economic development and affect the quality and satisfaction of users with the provision of administrative services. The measures of this program aim at improving the current state of the legislation (simplification, re-engineering and digitalization), but also aim at establishing preventive mechanisms against new barriers and burdens in future legislation (prior assessment – *ex ante*). RAB will bring measurable (quantitative) improvements to both businesses and citizens, enabling a better business environment and increasing the competitiveness of the national economy. The main goal in the area of service provision is shift from **traditional "rules" based to service-oriented public administration**. For this purpose, awareness campaigns, expanded cooperation with social and economic partners and the increased knowledge and skills of civil servants will be developed. The special target group in this respect are the civil servants who will be trained on "customer relations" topics. Among the main priorities is completion of alignment of special legislation (laws and by-laws) with the general administrative procedures, based on the new action plan of the Government and the uniform methodology. Combined measures will be implemented to ensure the implementation of the Law on General Administrative Procedures (LGAP), through the establishment of the preventive mechanism that will prevent deviations from the LGAP in the new legislation, increased knowledge and competences, as well as creating conditions for implementation of the "one-off" principle, which means the circulation of information rather than the members of the public.

The standardization and digitalization of public registers, standardization of services, including the creation of the central online register of administrative services, will be carried out to ensure the quality of service delivery and to create conditions for the multiplication of service delivery channels. These measures will be complemented by increasing the quality in the organization and management of institutions, through the gradual introduction of quality management tools in the public administration aimed at evaluating and increasing the effectiveness of institutional performance.

The quality of service delivery will be regularly checked against user satisfaction and additional measures will be taken for sustainable user engagement towards streamlining and reorganization of service delivery. The traditional way of providing services will be improved with the establishment of three (3) multi-functional centers for citizens, where common services will be provided in a simplified, friendly manner, saving users' time and resources. Strong political leadership and permanent guidance are a must for its success. Measures to improve the ICT infrastructure and technical conditions for broader digitalization of the service will be addressed

by the future e-government strategy. These measures will enable the integration and exchange of data between more institutions and more public registers that will be connected to the [e-Kosova](#) platform. Digitalization of business processes and services will increase work efficiency and reduce costs for both institutions and users. The review and reorganization of service delivery processes will be done before digitalization. The main assumption and prerequisite for achieving these objectives is clear institutional leadership for the entire priority area, cooperation, and strong inter-institutional coordination led by the Government.

Public Service and HRM: Professional, impartial and competent civil and public service employees are necessary to turn the vision of PARS into reality. **Building a modern and effective public service system with advanced HRM policies and practices** that are effectively implemented in the public sector is among the central goals of the PARS. The modernization and development of the public service system that started several years ago will continue to its completion. Enhanced HRM policies will improve personnel planning, merit-based recruitment and promotion processes, including transparency. They will develop competencies of civil servants, support better mobility and performance in the public service and will promote systematic monitoring of employee performance.

Reform of salaries for the entire public sector will continue, by completing legal and methodological framework, followed by implementation. Special attention will be paid to the sustainable implementation of these policies, also by strengthening oversight mechanisms. Measures will also be taken to ensure the accuracy and availability of data on employment and mobility in the public sector and the full use of the HRMIS system. In the next five years, several measures will be taken to achieve these objectives, which aim to: (a) improve legal and institutional framework in the public service; (b) implement the principles of professionalism, meritocracy, efficiency and equal opportunities for employment in the public service; (c) build and implement a fair salaries in the public service; and (d) improve and develop the professional capacities of public service employees. Implementation of measures and achievement of specific objectives under the priority area "Public Service and HRM" will enhance professionalism and effectiveness of the public service and will therefore contribute to effective and responsible governance in Kosovo.

Accountability and transparency: The successful completion of reforms aimed at improving the organization and functioning of the state administration is the main objective in this priority area. Although the earlier reforms provided a good legal basis for streamlining of the state administration, its full implementation and effects are yet to be seen. For this purpose, additional measures will be taken to ensure that the state administration is organized and developed in accordance with established criteria and standards. In this regard, coordination and supervisory responsibilities of the relevant institutions (Ministry of Internal Affairs - MIA, Office of the Prime Minister - OPM) must be strengthened and their capacities increased. The process of streamlining of agencies will assume a new dynamic, based on the criteria and improved methodology established by the government, while its implementation will also be monitored by the government. The accountability of agencies (including their management) for their performance will be

strengthened by the implementation of the results-oriented performance management system. The system will be promoted, implemented gradually and employees will be supported in developing the required knowledge, skills and techniques through training and capacity development programmes. The implementation of the system may require some internal organizational adjustments in the 'parent' ministries and the MIA will facilitate this process. The performance management system will also extend to the ministries within the broader framework of performance management coordinated by the OPM, thus increasing the accountability of the ministries' performance.

The government will promote transparency in its actions and adopt the policy of proactive communication of the state administration with the public by encouraging the state administration to provide more information on its activities and performance through websites and through the open data portal, including allowing citizens and business to make use of open data. Access to information held by the administration will be facilitated by strengthening the responsibilities of the Information and Privacy Agency (IPA), which will be provided more effective surveillance tools and improved collection of data and statistics related to access to information from the state administration. State administration accountability will also be promoted by the Government's support for the role and performance of independent oversight institutions such as the Ombudsman Institution and the National Audit Office (NAO). As a result of these activities, increased compliance of the administration with the recommendations of these institutions is expected.

The direction and implementation of the PARS will be coordinated at three levels:

- ***Political level*** – The Council of Ministers for Public Administration Reform (CMPAR), is the main structure responsible at the political level for the strategic direction and supervision of the reform process, including taking corrective measures. The Council meets at least two (2) times a year.
- ***PAR Secretariat*** – The Department of PAR (DPAR/MIA) which will serve as the secretariat for both CMPAR, as well as for continuous monitoring and reporting.
- ***Administrative level*** – consisting of two coordination groups responsible for the supervision of implementation, implementation of CMPAR instructions and coordination between institutions on a quarterly basis.

Progress in the implementation of the PARS will be regularly monitored and reported to CMPAR every six months. DPAR is responsible for establishing, maintaining and managing data collection system and their analysis for reporting purposes.

Considerable attention will be paid to regularly informing the public about the progress and results of the PAR. The organization and capacities for communication in the administration will be strengthened, information sources will be expanded, key messages and communication channels adapted to target different population groups and all the benefits of PAR will be clearly explained and communicated in order to garner support for its continuation.

The main assumptions of the actions that the Government should ensure to achieve the objectives of the PARS are:

- Clear institutional leadership for public administration reform;
- The organizational structure of the leading institution adapted to its functions;
- Sustainable, functional structures of inter-institutional coordination and cooperation of the government;
- Support for staff and capacity development;
- Regular monitoring and implementation of corrective measures; and
- Strengthened donor coordination to provide additional resources for implementation of PARS.

The Action Plan 2022 – 2024 of the PAR 2022 – 2027, the Indicators Passport, the Risk Management Matrix, and the PAR Promotion Plan form an integral part of this Strategy.

2. INTRODUCTION

The sustainable strategic approach to Public Administration Reform (PAR) was introduced in Kosovo during the drafting and adoption of the PAR Strategy 2007 – 2013, a comprehensive policy document that covered eight broad areas of public administration.¹ The next cycle of PAR policies began with the adoption of the second PAR Strategy 2010 – 2013 that expanded its scope to several additional areas.²

The last PAR strategic framework included four main planning documents: The Strategy for the Improvement of Policy Planning and Coordination 2017 – 2021 (SPPC), the Strategy for Better Regulation 2.0 2017 – 2021 (SBR), the Strategy for the Modernization of Public Administration 2015 – 2020 (SMPA) and the PFM Reform Strategy 2016 – 2020 (PFMRS). The new context created by the COVID-19 pandemic required a re-prioritization of activities, so with the support of SIGMA, the Transitional Action Plan for SMPA was developed, in order to establish a new approach for the last year of implementation (2021).

The diversity in management, coordination, monitoring and reporting on implementation, as well as the broader state efforts to streamline the number of planning documents influenced the Government's decision to plan the strategic development of the areas covered by the SMPA together with the planning of policies and better regulation through a single strategic document.

¹ Human resources, institutional structures, public administration management issues, communication with citizens, e-government, finances in public administration, anti-corruption and the quality of policies and legislation.

² It covered 12 areas of public administration and for each of them, one key objective was formulated, followed by a series of sub-objectives.

Due to its specifics, the SMFP remains a separate planning document. This decision essentially defined the scope of the new PAR Strategy, centered around the main principles of public administration for candidate countries and potential candidates³.

The restrictive measures related to COVID-19 and the frequent changes in the Government in 2020/21 caused delays in development of the new strategic framework of PAR. The context of its preparation was also influenced by the preparation of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, which has been established as the main long-term planning document for the implementation of Kosovo's vision for sustainable economic, social and environmental development.⁴ Consequently, and in accordance with the National Strategic Management Framework (NSMF), the PAR objectives should evolve from the sectoral specific strategic objectives of the NDP.

Such a hierarchy and the process of setting policy objectives from top to bottom also means that the achievement of the PARS objectives will directly contribute to the progress towards NDP strategic objectives.

Given that the PAR Strategy and the corresponding Action Plan are fully aligned with the objectives of NDP 2030, the PAR sector becomes the first to successfully link the medium-term strategy with the long-term National Development Objectives.

3. THE PARS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

3.1 Approach and work structures

The process of drafting the Public Administration Reform Strategy (PARS) 2022-2027 was preceded by various assessments of the progress of the reform against the expected results⁵. The drafting of the strategy was preceded by consultations with the relevant stakeholders to identify the main challenges and priorities for the new strategic cycle. Many of these consultations were held as part of preparations for the Good Governance pillar of the NDP 2030 and its corresponding thematic group (consisting of key actors, various institutional experts, civil society, academia, the private sector and development partners). These activities lay the qualitative foundations for further discussions on the main purpose and objectives of the PAR. In addition to the PAR Annual Monitoring Reports⁶ and European Commission (EC) reports on Kosovo, other internal and external evaluations were also used for the development of the PARS⁷.

Following recommendations of the PAR Special Group (May 2021) and the Government's decision to consolidate the reforms of the three areas into a single PARS, the development of the new strategic document officially began with the creation of the Inter-institutional Working Group

³ <https://sigmaweb.org/publications/principles-public-administration.htm>

⁴ According Government Decision..... October 2018

⁵ *Analysis on the importance and implementation of SIPP 2017-2021, SBR 2017-2021 and SMPA 2015-2020, February 2021, Comprehensive report on the implementation of the Public Finance Management Reform Strategy 2016-2020; The EU-funded project "Support for the Sectoral Reform Contract for Public Administration Reform (PAR)";*

⁶ Prepared by the Minister of Internal Affairs (MIA)

⁷ OECD / SIGMA monitoring report on Kosovo, November 2021: <https://bit.ly/39IY2qY>; National Monitoring of PAR - Kosovo 2019/2020 Group for Legal and Political Studies, Prishtina 2021

(PARS WG)⁸. During the first WG meetings, it was decided that the new PARS will be structured into four (4) main priority areas:

- Policy Development and Coordination;
- Public Service and Human Resources Management;
- Service delivery; and
- Accountability and Transparency.

3.2 Methodology

The procedural development of the PARS is guided by the provisions of the Administrative Instruction for Planning and Drafting of Strategic Documents and Action Plans⁹. For this purpose, two sub-working groups (WGs) led the process through structured workshops:

- Sub-Group for Policy Planning and Coordination and for Service Delivery, led by the Office of Strategic Planning of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM); and
- Sub-Group on Public Service and HRM and on Accountability and Transparency, led by the Department for Public Administration Reform (DPAR) in the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The situational analysis was carried out on the basis of various internal and external assessments and extensive stakeholder consultations.¹⁰ The most important priority areas of reform intervention were identified using the adapted PAR questionnaire, conducted in collaboration with the PARS WG. Methodologically, the drafting of the PARS was organized in accordance with the Manual for Planning, Drafting and Monitoring of Strategic Documents and their Action Plans (SPO, 2021)¹¹ and SIGMA on PAR strategies¹².

The activities carried out by the Working Group are supported by local and international experts, engaged through EU-funded project¹³. The comments and suggestions of the EU Office in Prishtina and OECD/SIGMA have been taken into account.

The development of the 2022-2027 PARS is determined by its evolving context. On the one hand, all the strategic documents that were used for reforms in public administration in recent years have expired, while on the other hand, the development of the new National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 has begun. Both processes have informed and influenced the advancement of PAR's new strategic framework. Lessons learned from previous reforms helped to identify implementation challenges in practice, while the development of the NDP enabled better alignment of PARS objectives to national development goals. Therefore, setting the objectives of PARS 2022-2027 combines the bottom-up and top-down approach.

⁸ Decision No. 842/2021 for establishment of the working group for drafting of the Strategic Framework for Public Administration Reform, Ministry of Internal Affairs 09.02.2021

⁹ Administrative Instruction No. 07/2018 on Planning and Drafting of Strategic Documents and Action Plans, article 8, paragraph 1.

¹⁰ *SWOT analysis that supports the development process of NDS 2030, Strategic Planning Office 2021; An overview of the progress and challenges of the implementation of the public administration reform priorities for the period 2015-20, April, 2022, Prishtina*

¹¹ *Manual on Planning, Drafting and Monitoring of Strategic Documents and Action Plans (SPO, 2021)*

¹² *Toolkit for preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of PAR and sector strategies, OECD/SIGMA, 2018*

¹³ EU-funded technical assistance projects "Support for the Sector Reform Contract for Public Administration Reform (PAR)" and "Support for the Office of Strategic Planning in Kosovo"

4. PARS 2022-2027 DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

The development of the PARS 2022-2027 is determined by its evolving context. On the one hand, all strategic documents that were used in reforms of recent years have expired, while on the other hand, the development of the new National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 has begun. Both processes have informed and have influenced the advancement of PAR's new strategic framework. Lessons learned from previous reforms helped to identify implementation challenges in practice, while the development of the NDP enabled better alignment of PARS objectives to national development goals. Therefore, setting the objectives of PARS 2022-2027 combines the bottom-up and top-down approach. Moreover, a number of horizontal issues, paramount for the successful implementation of the NDP 2030 and the PARS 2022-2027, were recognized and their relationships were assessed.

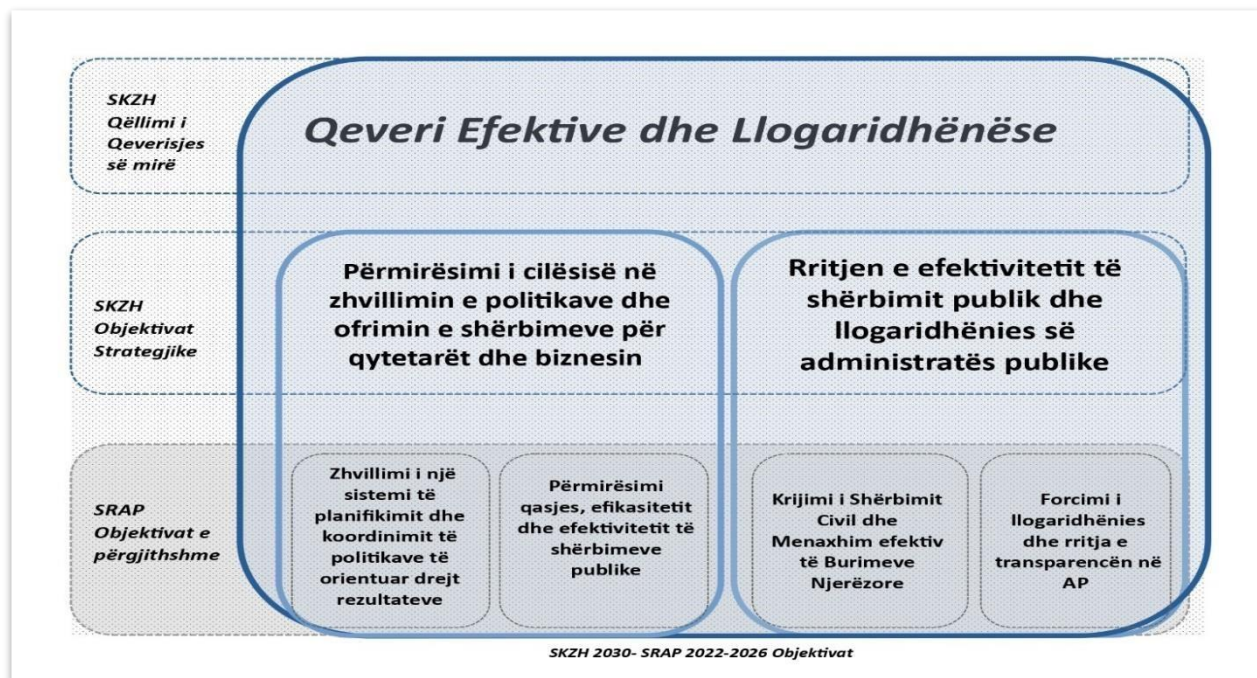
4.1 Relation to the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030

The foundation for the development of all sectoral strategies, including the Strategic Framework of PAR 2022-2027 has been determined by the elaboration of NDP 2030, which is the highest strategic document for the sustainable development of the country. Sustainable development means, among other things, "Effective and Accountable Government", capable of leading, ensuring and promoting national growth and development. In order to achieve such a development goal, improvements in the quality of policy development and provision of services to citizens and business, as well as increasing the effectiveness of public service and accountability of public administration have been set as the two main strategic objectives of the Good Governance Pillar of NDP.

These two strategic objectives of the Good Governance Pillar of NDP have been transposed into four general objectives of PARS 2022-2027. Progress in accomplishing the general objectives of the PARS 2022-2027 will contribute directly to the progress of the NDP development objectives, more specifically under strategic objectives of Good Governance. The hierarchy and consistency between these objectives is established, as illustrated below¹⁴:

Figure 1: Objectives of NDP 2030 and PARS 2022-2027

¹⁴ The concept of the National Performance Management Framework requires the linking and setting of top-down objectives from the NDS to sectoral strategies, as well as the hierarchy and consistency of performance indicators.



4.2 Lessons learned from the process of implementing PAR strategies in previous periods

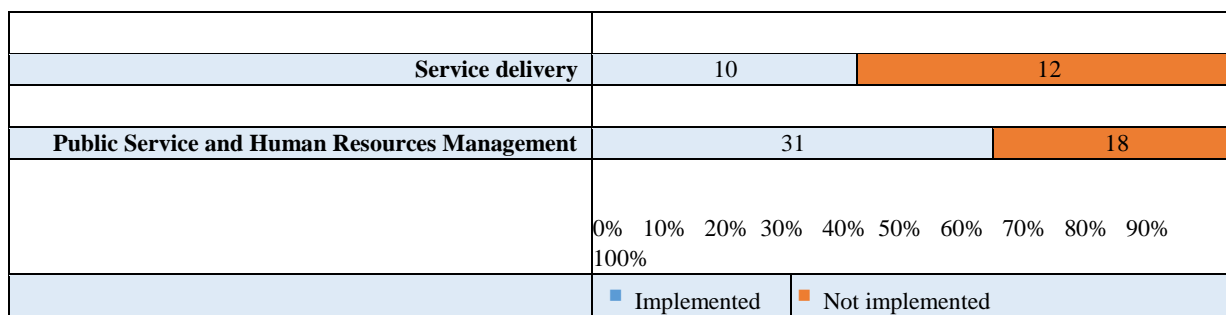
The implementation of PAR strategies over the past six (6) years has seen limited progress in many policy areas, although the level and dynamics of change were not linear. The main horizontal management systems have been strengthened and administrative capacities have been raised, compared to their starting points in 2015. In addition to the impact of COVID-19 measures that affected the reforms, the frequent changes in the government in 2020/21, restructuring of several ministries, including the one responsible for the PA, and the extended judicial review of the main reform legislation by the Constitutional Court, hampered steady direction of RAP and its unimpeded implementation.

Overall, by the end of 2021, 54% of the planned reform measures have been implemented while strategic objectives have not been fully accomplished.¹⁵

Figure 2: The PAR Strategic Framework implementation rate

The rate of implementation of reform measures by priority policy		
Public Finance Management	31	18
Policy Coordination and Development	18	17
Accountability	10	9

¹⁵ "An overview of the progress and challenges of the implementation of the public administration reform priorities for the period 2015-2020", p.6, April, 2022, Prishtina



The most visible progress in the field of Public Service and HRM has been made in increasing the transparency of employment in the civil and public service, based on the Law on Public Officials (LPO)¹⁶. The recruitment module of the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) provides a single point of access to all information on civil service vacancies at the central and local administration level, including information on various stages of the selection process in real time. The fairness and impartiality of the selection process is ensured by the establishment of electronic testing of candidates, where personal or general human intervention is reduced to a significant level. The merit-based recruitment process will further improve with the advancement of techniques and skills for managing competency-based interviews. The advancement of other HRM policies such as personnel planning, performance appraisal or systematic professional development is based on the current legal framework and requires sustained implementation and capacity development, while the elimination of unfair payments still needs to be properly included in the legislation. The performance of HRMIS provides a good example of how ICT can support efficiency and transparency of public administration and ultimately influence the increase of public trust. The basic legislation for the public service must build and provide guarantees for a stable and professional civil service, in accordance with the standards and general principles of public administration, as they are necessary to achieve the goal of Good Governance (NDP development).

Digitalization of public and administrative services has progressed slowly, despite the lack of central policy for service delivery standards and insufficient coordination at the governmental level. The e-Kosova portal has been launched, offering over 130 different public services for citizens and business, with a different level of interaction and transaction options. The further digitalization of administrative services is also hindered by the weak implementation of the legislation on general administrative procedures and in particular the low level of harmonization of the special legislation that regulates the provision of specific sectoral services. The simplification and digitalization of administrative procedures has recently been revised by renewing the Programme on Prevention and Reduction of Administrative Burden 2022-2027. These measures should complement streamlining of the provision of administrative services based on the law on general administrative procedures and ultimately should facilitate access to and increase the quality of administrative services for businesses and citizens. For more systematic changes and improvements in the service delivery, the following is necessary: appropriate institutional and organizational leadership for defining policies and standards for provision of administrative services; coordinated efforts of the Government and the Parliament on legal

¹⁶ Law No. 06/L-114 on Public Officials

harmonization; comprehensive coordination mechanisms and significant increase of administrative capacities.

The legal framework for rational organization and clear lines of accountability, including managerial accountability in public administration, was established under the basic law on organization of administration in 2019 (LOFSAIA¹⁷) and was later supplemented by government regulation, which regulates the performance management system of agencies. This measure required a significant restructuring and reorganization of the institutions as it sets the standards for the organization and internal functioning of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPC) and the ministerial system, including the regulatory agencies. The implementation of the new system of internal organization faced numerous difficulties, from the proper understanding of the provisions to the inconsistent implementation of the main legal provisions. The government reaffirmed its commitment to improvements by drafting and sending two laws for parliamentary scrutiny aimed at streamlining six agencies. For successful implementation, the whole-government approach is needed, including transparent criteria for streamlining and close coordination with the Parliament. Strengthening the advisory and compliance control functions, both in the internal organization and in the performance management system of the agencies, together with the further advancement of the capacities of the responsible authorities, will be another important success factor.

Policy development and coordination were advanced with the establishment of uniform rules for drafting of strategic documents and action planning. Further streamlining and integration of strategic documents into the Government's Work Plan and its legislative plan has also continued. Improvements to the hierarchy of strategic documents have also been made with the preparation of the National Development Plan 2030, the establishment of the Strategic Planning Committee and the presentation of the Strategic Planning and Management Framework. that should increase the coherence of its policy planning documents and objectives. While progress was made in developing the concept, policy coordination centered on government remained weak and fragmented, including policy planning capacities in line ministries and institutions. Alignment and integration of strategic and financial planning is yet to be addressed with more specific actions. Close coordination and cooperation with other line institutions, including the development of their capacities, proved to be necessary for further development of the policy planning system. Although more tools and instruments for policy development were introduced in the regulatory framework based on analysis (e.g. Concept Document, Regulatory Impact Assessment), consistent implementation is lacking and capacities in line institutions remain largely weak. Compliance control by central Government bodies should be strengthened including systematic support for capacity development.

Implementation of the Public Administration Reform of 2015 highlights some important lessons both in terms of the adequacy of strategic documents, but also challenges related to its implementation. The evaluation of the four strategic documents mostly confirmed the continued relevance of its strategic objectives, but also proved that the objectives could be better targeted through tailored actions¹⁸. While the entire strategic document set out ambitious reforms, the proper sequence of actions to support the priority objectives was lacking. The effectiveness of

¹⁷ Law No. 06 / L -113 on the Organization and Functioning of the State Administration and Independent Agencies

¹⁸ *Analysis on the importance and implementation of SPPC 2017-2021, SBR 2017-2021 and SMPA 2015-2020, February 2021, The EU-funded project "Support for the Sectoral Reform Contract for Public Administration Reform (PAR)"*

implementation was affected by insufficient capacities (also caused by frequent institutional restructuring), therefore capacity development should be seen as a strategic priority of any future reform. Monitoring of implementation was quite fragmented, although improvements were made over time, through the consolidation of monitoring reports for the four strategies. The Council of Ministers for PAR, as the highest governing authority for reforms, regularly reviewed monitoring reports, but substantive discussions and decisions on improvements were lacking. In addition to gaps in cost projections for actions in the previous PAR strategies, reporting on policy results is strongly recommended for the future, as the reporting on results does not provide clarity for improving policies and results. Assumptions and risks to the successful implementation of the reform were not clearly identified and, as a result, almost no mitigating measures were taken to reduce their impact. Considering the high impact of various external and internal factors on the successful implementation of the reform, risk assessment and risk management measures should be an integral part of the new PAR Strategy and should be updated with each monitoring report.¹⁹

4.3 Stakeholder analysis

This analysis confirmed that political stability and legal predictability play an important role in the implementation of reforms. The frequent changes in the Government and the judicial review of the constitutionality of the main reform legislation (2019/20), caused delays in the reorganization of the public service and the HRM system, and postponed the salaries reform in the public sector by more than two years²⁰. The review and alignment of the LPO with the decision of the Constitutional Court prompted the re-thinking of the main features of the Public Service and Civil Service system which go beyond the requirements of constitutional alignment and its final result is not visible at the time of drafting of this document. The need to re-draft the Law on Public Sector Salaries (LPSS) basically extended the stalemate in the salaries reform, which has been pending for years now. However, "recruitment and promotion based on merit that provides equal opportunities for all citizens" and "a fair salaries system that ensures equal pay for equal work" remain among the specific objectives of the Government²⁰. More broadly, the Government pledged that "the PAR policy framework will be finalized in line with European principles, standards and best practices" and has acknowledged PAR as a key priority, aimed at profoundly changing the quality of services to citizens, businesses and institutions as well as to create a modern administration capable of successfully finalizing the integration of the Republic of Kosovo into the European Union²².

Restructuring and merging several ministries, including the one responsible for PAR, and frequent changes in PAR leadership and management (2020/21) affected the intensity, dynamics and priorities of the reform. Some responsibilities related to the PAR are yet to be addressed in the internal organization of the MIA (e.g. monitoring and coordinating the implementation of general administrative procedures and harmonizing special legislation including the broader service delivery policy, e-government or open data). The main units associated with PAR: The Department for Management of Public Officials and the Department for PAR need to increase staff and

¹⁹ *Comprehensive report on the implementation of the Public Finance Management Reform Strategy 2016-2020, the EU-funded project "Support for the Sectoral Reform Contract for Public Administration Reform (RAP)"* ²⁰ The judgment of the Constitutional Court in Case No. KO219/19 dated 30.07.2020

²⁰ Program of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo 2021-2025, May 2021, p. 20 ²² Program of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo 2021-2025, May 2021, p. 20 ²³ i.e. Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS)

capacities to support their leading role of PAR coordination. This is also a challenging task for MIA management as PAR represents a different, rather small part of its broad portfolio, yet it requires a great deal of attention and focus, beyond the "usual work" of MIA.

Line ministries and relevant agencies should be more engaged and better informed about PAR policies so that they can implement reform measures in a timely and appropriate manner. Improved communication of PAR and targeted capacity development (i.e. specific training or networking of practitioners) can help overcome limited understanding and motivation for change.

Experience so far shows that very few civil society organizations (CSOs) actively follow or contribute to the PAR agenda. Their interest mostly refers to the quality, efficiency or costs of service provision and recently also to the public service system. Several CSOs are members of the regional PAR monitoring network in the Western Balkans (WB) and are very active in PAR, including on research and structured discussion with national authorities and international organizations²³. The challenge for broader engagement of CSOs in PAR is limited financial resources therefore this is an area where structured cooperation and coordination with donors can complement social dialogue. The interests of the business community are also motivated around the quality and costs of public services, but even more so about the costs of meeting business requirements, defined by legislation. The business community is fragmented in its representation, even though it has lobbying potential.

The preparation of the Programme for Prevention and Reduction of Administrative Burden 2022-2027, in which this target group was actively invited to contribute, demonstrated strong business interest in simplifying licensing and permit procedures, and this approach will be emulated for the implementation of PAR, when appropriate.

The most prominent implementing partners of the PAR are the EU (EU Office in Prishtina - EUOK), which has provided technical and financial support to the PAR in Kosovo since its inception in 2007. The technical assistance support is complemented by additional expertise from a joint EU-SIGMA/OECD initiative that is also conducting periodic monitoring of the implementation of the PAR for the entire Western Balkans region. From 2018/19, the EU's financial assistance for PAR has been increased through the sector's budget support facility²¹. The main purpose of EU support is development of administrative capacities and structures necessary for EU accession and membership. The EU membership perspective is, at the same time, among the main drivers and incentives for the ongoing Public Administration Reforms. Other international donors also contribute to the implementation of some reform measures, such as GIZ's support for public finance management reform, British aid for the recruitment and development of senior management capacities (BDO), Switzerland's support for the development of local administration, USAID support for Transparent, Effective and Accountable Municipalities and similar partners. Although there is cooperation between donors, the mechanism for regular coordination with state authorities can usually amplify the benefits of such assistance, and the PARs will address this issue.

²¹ Contract for the Reform of the PAR Sector between the EU and Kosovo DMN -009-2017, 14.12.2017

5. HORIZONTAL AGENDA

"Horizontal agendas" represent an additional horizontal dimension of sectoral planning, requiring cross-sectoral coordination across the Government²². The main objectives of the horizontal agendas should be achieved in more sectors, implementing a series of concrete actions, planned and budgeted for under specific sectoral strategies. Several horizontal dimensions identified by NDS 2030 are also relevant for PARS 2022-2026:

Digital Agenda 2030 - addresses opportunities for digitization and increased use of ICT in the country, including the modernization of public administration. The main objective in this direction is to improve delivery of public and administrative services. The PARS 2022-2026 will address the quality and accessibility of services, including e-services, while the digital agenda and e-government strategy will address the interoperability between public registers, data and register governance, e-government cloud and security networks, digital payment infrastructure, digitization and improvements in technological infrastructure. Closely related and complementary to PARS, The Government's Program for the Prevention and Reduction of Administrative Burden 2022-2027 aims at administrative simplification including the re-design of service delivery processes, lifting the administrative burden for citizens and business and the digitalization of services;

Inclusiveness - this is the horizontal goal under NDP 2030 that aims to create equal opportunities for development, well-being and healthy life in Kosovo, free of any discrimination. In relation to the public administration reform process, this includes, among others, the protection of the rights of national minorities, the right to provide services in the official languages of the Republic of Kosovo, equal opportunities for employment, reduction and removal of gender gaps, etc. This will be achieved by creating a comprehensive public service (based on meritocratic recruitment, appropriate and meritocratic performance evaluation, gender-sensitive HRM, etc.), comprehensive budgeting of the public sector (from planning and policy-making, to budget allocation, implementation and impact review); legal and administrative mechanisms aimed at determining the rights of citizens to specific social rights in relation to service delivery and ensuring that the state fulfills its obligations;

Green Agenda - addresses growing environmental and climate challenges by putting sustainable development, resource efficiency, nature protection and climate action at the center of all economic activities. A well-organized and functional public sector is essential to achieving these green goals. The best synergies between the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainable socio-economic development can be achieved by ensuring policy coherence at all levels of government. Targeted inter-agency coordination, statistics and other evidence-based data, improved strategic planning and impact assessments will contribute to the Green Agenda. Other results will be achieved through gradual digitization of administrative services and consequently the reduction of paper consumption in public administration, improved energy efficiency in public buildings, etc.

²² Draft National Development Strategy 2030, available at <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/documents.php>

Fight against corruption - is one of the main strategic objectives under the Development Objective of NDP "High readiness for peace and security" under "Pillar III - Security and Rule of Law". The last Anti-Corruption Strategy in Kosovo expired in 2018. Therefore, the Rule of Law Strategy 2021-2026 includes specific measures aimed at strengthening the institutional framework against corruption, improving the asset declaration system and by-laws for accepting gifts.

The fight against corruption in public administration - includes specific measures aimed at guaranteeing full accountability in the public administration, establishing clear lines of accountability in the state administration according to LOFASHAP, with improvements in internal organization and appropriate delegation of responsibilities, transparent recruitment and performance evaluation (allowing civil society, relevant unions and other international actors to engage in monitoring such processes), developing and implementing integrity plans; providing systematic ethics and integrity training programs (for both civil servants and selection committees); preventing illegal and inappropriate orders in the public service and sanctioning the executor and the orderer, encouraging denunciation in the public administration and ensuring their proper protection, ensuring simplified service delivery, periodically monitoring the implementation of the code of ethics and supporting the Anti-Corruption Agency in the implementation of legal instruments against corruption. In general terms, transparency, open data and the right to information will serve as guidelines for the principles of good administration, ensuring that the established mechanisms are effective. In addition to complete transparency in decision-making, special attention should also be paid to the right of citizens to proper information. In order to achieve this, the institutions must ensure full openness and proper access to the documents for the general public, in accordance with the legislation in force.

Local Self-Government Strategy 2016-2026 (LSGS) - aims to provide better municipal services and increase the quality of life of citizens. Its strategic objectives are to strengthen the sustainable economic and social development of the municipalities, including improvement of the democratic representation of citizens, improved governance and efficiency of the municipal administration. Increased institutional and professional capacities of the local administration to deliver services is also among its main objectives, along with strengthening the partnership with civil society and businesses as well as the promotion of cultural diversity, natural and social assets for development. These objectives are fully in line with the vision of PARS. The objectives of the PARS and in particular those for improving governance and service delivery actually meet similar goals set out in the LSGS. This involves any segment of local administration, affected by legislation (e.g. administrative procedures and service delivery, civil service system, access to information, public sector salary system, etc.). PARS also targets such administrative duties and responsibilities, while recognizing the autonomy of local administration.

Some of the objectives included in the horizontal agendas will be achieved mainly, but not exclusively, by implementing a series of concrete actions, planned under the specific objectives of the PARS presented below:

Figure 3: Specific PARS objectives and horizontal objectives

PARS areas		Number of specific PARS objectives			
		Policy Planning and Coordination	Public Service and HRM	Accountability & Transparency	Service delivery
Horizontal Agenda	Digital Agenda	1.2, 1.3	2.1, 2.2	3.2, 3.3	4.1, 4.3, 4.4
	Inclusiveness		2.2	3.2, 3.3	4.3, 4.4
	Green Agenda	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4			4.1, 4.3, 4.4
	Fight against corruption	1.2, 1.3	2.1, 2.2, 2.3	3.1, 3.2	4.2.
	Local Self-Government		2.1, 2.3, 2.4	3	4.1, 4.2

6. SITUATION ANALYSIS, CHALLENGES AND ISSUES IDENTIFIED

Situation analysis was made based on the current situation, focusing on the challenges and problems according to the four areas covered by the strategy: (a) Policy Planning and Coordination; (b) Public Service delivery 3) Public Service and Human Resource Management (HRM); (d) Accountability and Transparency.

6.1 Policy Planning and Coordination

The reform initiatives undertaken in the field of policy planning and coordination have established a framework for the planning and coordination of real policies in the Government of Kosovo. Strategy for the Improvement of Policy Planning and Coordination (SIPPC) 2017-2021, as the precursor strategy of the Strategic Objective for policy planning and coordination, led to some significant improvements in this area, despite low implementation rate.²³ The key reforms undertaken include the revision of the Administrative Instruction for planning and drafting of strategic documents and action plans, the partial operationalization of strategic planning structures and the initiation of the drafting of the National Development Plan.²⁴ Other major planned reforms have slowed down considerably as a result of political developments, elections and frequent change in government²⁵ and as a result, planning and coordination has been assessed as inadequate and Kosovo scored lower than the average of other countries in the Western Balkans.²⁶

²³ According to the assessment made by the Ministry of Internal Affairs in "An overview of the progress and challenges of the implementation of the priorities of the reform of the Public Administration for the period 2015-2020", it is estimated that 51% of priorities included in the Strategy for improvement of planning and coordination of policies were implemented during this period. Similarly, in a report prepared by the Strategic Planning Office in April 2022, it is estimated that in 2021 the Strategy for the improvement of planning and policy coordination has been implemented at a rate of 37% of activities planned for 2021. For more, see the reports at: <https://mpb.rks-gov.net/ap/page.aspx?id=1,1303>

²⁴ For more, see MIA report of April 2022 at: Overview of progress and challenges in the implementation of the public administration reform priorities for the period 2015-2020", p.6, April, 2022, Prishtina Page 35.

²⁵ European Commission Progress Report on Kosovo 2021 (page 12).

²⁶ Monitoring report (SIGMA), 2021, p. 28.

Based on the situation in this field and the need to reform public administration in general and policy planning and coordination in particular, the Government of Kosovo designated it as its priority under the Government Program 2021-2025. Under this program, the Government aims to introduce effective governance so that its decision-making is based on evidence, rational use of its financial resources, while applying a transparent approach.

Kosovo has an established administrative infrastructure which is largely able to plan, coordinate, draft, implement and monitor policy documents at ministries and central government. Also, the Government established central coordinating structures for strategic planning such as the Strategic Planning Committee and the Strategic Planning Steering Group. However, these structures should have a planned decision-making process that follows timelines for key policy decisions.

Policy planning and implementation is overburdened due to the lack of a clear legal infrastructure. The government adopted Administrative Instruction No. 07/2018 for planning and drafting of strategic documents and action plans, which aims to create a unified practice for the process of planning and drafting strategic documents.²⁷

However, the AI does not outline the hierarchy of policy documents, their planning and drafting methodology, their interconnection, their internal and public consultation approach, as well as reporting on implementation, among others. As a result, the process of planning, drafting, implementation, and reporting is overburdened and, in most cases, associated with excessive administrative and financial resources.

Some of the strategic documents, such as the National Development Plan, serve as a reference point for other sectoral documents and, as such, enjoy higher support from the administration, but the lack of a regulation that delineates the hierarchy of these documents represents an obstacle. The current regulation in effect provides a solid methodological background for strategic planning and coordination, however this regulation does not establish a clear hierarchy of policy documents, unified performance management framework such as the system of objectives, goals and indicators, which enable connecting proposed strategy with an objective. The lack of established horizontal and vertical links between documents and objectives complicates the work of the planning, implementation and reporting mechanisms of strategies and also complicates the work of the Strategic Planning Office under OPM to assess the need for, and the scope of a new strategy.

The European Agenda is largely harmonized with the government's annual work plan, however it has a low implementation rate. The low implementation rate of the European Agenda also comes as a result of a deficient and fragmented political focus on the implementation of policy documents of the European Agenda such as NPISAA, the European Reforms Agenda (ERA), and the Economic Reforms Programme (ERP). The approach to these documents should be commensurate with the importance attached to the European integration process as a national priority and should not be fragmented. There is also no consolidated report that presents the level of harmonization between the sectoral strategic documents and the budget, as well as their inclusion in the

²⁷ For more, see Administrative Instruction No. 07/2018, accessible at: <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=18813>

MediumTerm Expenditure Framework (MEF) and subsequently in the Law on budget allocations for the budget of the Republic of Kosovo. Although adoption of any strategic document or a draft law is preceded by a budgetary impact assessment, the costing for implementation of the document against the budget of the budgetary organization is incomplete. As a result, many sectoral strategic documents are, at best, partially implemented.

While the data suggests progress, improving the design of policies and legislation by ensuring that they are evidence-based and contribute to informed decision-making is an area that shows persistent room for improvement. Moreover, the regulation for planning and drafting of strategic documents and evidence-based policy planning is outdated and, in most cases, not thoroughly complied with. The current system of drafting Concept Papers before the start of drafting new legislation is critical for meeting the minimum requirements of impact assessment. However, this is only applied to legislation and does not extend to other policies, such as strategies and by-laws. Even in cases of primary legislation, in most cases, there is not insufficient connection between the *ex ante* analysis and the impact with the adopted policy.

Reports on implementation of the Strategy for the improvement of policy planning and coordination 2017-2021 identify several shortcomings: the level of harmonization of SPO activities with key policy documents, their implementation, as well as drafting and publication of annual reports on the implementation of strategic documents. In addition to being reported under SIPPC have also been identified in the SIGMA Report 2021. The strategic and operational plans of the Government of Kosovo are not sufficiently connected to the objectives and activities planned in the policy documents. Monitoring its implementation is periodic, but it is a very ambitious plan, therefore a large number of planned activities are often carried over to the following year.

Implementation of policy documents and reporting on their implementation remains a challenge for all sectors. A properly functioning monitoring and reporting framework is partially in place, but this framework does not provide a unified reporting system across all government institutions. Some of the institutions have developed electronic monitoring systems on the implementation of policy documents, however, there is no unified approach and these electronic monitoring systems are often compromised by changes in the reporting format. Even in cases where monitoring reports are developed, these reports are often inaccessible to the public, as they are not published. To improve the interconnection of policy documents and their implementation, a unified reporting approach and, potentially, a government-wide information system is needed.

6.2 Service delivery

The implementation of the reform has, so far, led to some significant improvements, despite the fact that only 48% of the activities planned in the SMPA have been implemented²⁸. While the most visible progress has been made in the development of the technical infrastructure for the digitalization of the public service, only initial steps have been made towards the establishing a coherent legal framework for administrative procedures and service delivery. The function of policy development for service delivery, including digital transformation, remains unclear and no

²⁸ Overview of progress and challenges in the implementation of Public Administration Reform priorities for the period 2015-2020, p.", p. 21.

mechanism has been introduced to ensure coordination between the various institutions engaged in service delivery. The measurement of user satisfaction is diversified and the quality of data is improved. However, the perception of user satisfaction with service delivery is in decline²⁹. Kosovo is performing below the regional average of improvements in the provision of services.³⁰

The strategic documents defining the policy framework for service delivery in Kosovo have expired at the end of 2021, although their objectives have only been partially achieved³¹. Consistent legal framework on administrative procedures (*set as specific objectives in the SMPA*) remains relevant, but as distant an objective as it was after the adoption of the Law on General Administrative Procedures (LGAP) in 2017. With the exception of capacity building, no other activities have been carried out to support the implementation of the reforms brought about by the LGAP³². LGAP has, among other innovations, also introduced the single point of contact (one stop shop) for administrative procedures, the 'one time principle' or the 'help desk' for general administrative procedures, none of which have been implemented. Due to the lack of coordination and communication between the central and local administration, the pilot project of the "One Stop Shop" in the municipality of Prizren is only partially successful on services provided by the local administration, although it primarily serves the information purposes.

The expected alignment of separate laws with the LGAP is at a very early stage. In 2021, the first group of 49 separate laws (of the total 231 laws slated for harmonization) was consolidated into the Omnibus Law, however, a year later, it is still awaiting the parliamentary opinion on the use of this legal technique in the legislative system of Kosovo. The magnitude of this task can be further illustrated by the estimate that more than 1,000 by-laws require similar revision and harmonization. As of 2019, only 5% of laws have been aligned with the LGAP³³. To date, no plans have been made to predict when and how the government intends to approach this process. Although efforts have been made to create an inter-institutional coordination mechanism to guide the process of harmonization with the LGAP at the operational level, no progress has been made, mainly due to frequent changes and lack of continuity in the Government (Coordination Forum for Harmonization of Administrative Procedures³⁴). In addition to the LGAP, the Law on the System of Permits and Licenses (LSPL)³⁵ and the Law on Inspections (LI)³⁶ also promote good administration and better service provision for businesses and citizens and their implementation has faced challenges similar to the harmonization with the LGAP (an estimated 60 separate laws governing inspection and 480 permits and licenses have to be reviewed from the perspective of reducing the administrative burden). All these legislative changes will require a harmonized and coordinated approach throughout the Government, but also with the Parliament. In addition to the implementation of the LGAP, the implementation of the Program for the Prevention and Reduction

²⁹ Monitoring Report (SIGMA) 2021, p. 121.

³⁰ Kosovo has been rated at 2.5 out of 5, while the regional average is 3.1, Monitoring Report (SIGMA) 2021, p.

³¹ NDS 2016-2021, SMPA 2015-2020/21, BRS 2.0 2017-2021

³² During 2018/19, the LGAP implementation training program was delivered to around 600 civil servants.

³³ Summary of progress and challenges in the implementation of Public Administration Reform priorities for the period 2015-2020, p. 24. Table No. 5

³⁴ The mechanism chaired by MAP and made of the main institutions responsible for key aspects of service delivery, such as OPM, which is responsible for the overall coordination of policies and legislative agenda as well as for licenses and permits, MTI which is responsible for services to businesses, MLGA which is responsible for local level, etc.; Decision on the establishment of the Coordination Forum for the harmonization of administrative procedures, Ministry of Public Administration No. 10, 12.03.2019

³⁵ Law No. 04/ L-202 on the System of Permits and Licenses

³⁶ Law No. 08/L-067 on Inspections

of Administrative Burden 2022-2027 will introduce new administrative approach, improving the service delivery, raising the value of international indicators and indirectly encouraging new reforms.

The MIA competences on PAR have not been fully transposed into its internal organization, therefore there is no organizational unit charged with responsibility for general administrative procedures, nor for the broader service delivery policy, including for development of electronic services³⁷. In reality, the Department of PAR (DPAR) works on strategic aspects of service delivery, the Legal Department covers some legal aspects while the Agency for Information Society (AIS) is formally responsible for administrative simplification and for IT solutions; all these entities should increase cooperation and coordination. As a result, the process of harmonization of the LGAP is mainly carried out and directed from outside, and the control of the compatibility of the new legislation with the provisions of the LGAP is yet to be established in the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Some laws adopted after the entry into force of the LGAP have even introduced new special administrative procedures or diminished safeguards related to service delivery. Such a situation also confirms the lack of coordination between MIA bodies and OPM as well as the fragmentation and the weak coordination between the central government bodies themselves in the course of review of concept documents and legislative proposals. All the while, the capacities inherited from the former Ministry of Public Administration have been weakened and dispersed. Thus, another objective of the SMPA, the creation of institutional mechanisms and capacities for management, planning, monitoring and implementation, has not been achieved. The parallel implementation of these reforms will present significant challenges for coordination in each institution and between them, but in particular at the level of the OPM, as it may entail the risk of multiple revisions and changes to the same legislation within a similar timeframe. Similarly, their implementation will greatly depend on proper communication, understanding and commitment to reform, and the skills and competencies of civil servants who must bring change into reality, as their current level shows that there are significant gaps and shortages. The lack of a leading institution for the provision of public and administrative services is recognized as one of the main obstacles for improvements in this area³⁸. As it seriously affects the Government's key PAR priority "*...to profoundly change the quality of services for citizens, businesses and institutions...*", it should also be recognized as a high priority for under the new PAR Strategy³⁹.

The lack of a central institution responsible for the development of service delivery policies has also led to a lack of service delivery standards. As no institution monitors how service delivery is performed in practice, or how many services are digitalized, there are no reliable data to inform a structured and comprehensive approach to standardizing service delivery. Although efforts to complete the list of public services provided by the central and local administration began many

³⁷ The Ministry of Internal Affairs is responsible, among other things, to "prepare public policies.... to determine mandatory standards in the field of ... public administrative services, the functional organization of state administration institutions and e-government"; Government Regulation GoK No. 02/2021 on the areas of administrative responsibility of the Office of the Prime Minister and Ministries, Annex 1, section 5

³⁸ "A comprehensive modernization of citizen-oriented service delivery is hindered by the lack of a stable institutional set-up and illustrated by the fact that no unit responsible for service delivery policies has been installed", SIGMA 2021 monitoring report, p. 116

³⁹ The Program of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo 2021-2025, May 2021, p.20

years ago, it has not been given adequate attention and the list of services has not been regularly updated or upgraded with additional information.

Providing an updated and reliable list or a catalog of all public services provided by the administration is a prerequisite and a basis for the structured and systematic simplification of service delivery, the reduction of the administrative burden and eventually digitalization, as intended by the LPAG and, in particular, the ABR Programme. Similarly, the lack of central guidance and assistance has left out improvements and standardization of public registers. This issue has been laid bare and stark with the progress in the interoperability framework (Government Gateway Platform) in recent years. Currently, about forty (40) different government information systems are connected through the platform, including the main public registers, enabling the exchange of data between these systems for hundreds of public services and making the principle of "once only" technically feasible. What emerged as a barrier to its wider implementation are outdated and inaccurate data in many public registries, an issue which needs to be addressed by central data quality assurance. User engagement tools have become diverse over the past few years. The collection of user comments started with the so-called e-Box, which provides very basic information, and continued with the more extensive public survey that included 5,403 citizens across 10 municipalities to gauge user satisfaction with the services rendered by 18 institutions was carried out in 2019.⁴⁰ These efforts were deemed positive, but also haphazard rather than a result of a systematic approach to obtain and use feedback for reengineering and streamlining service delivery processes. There is no record that the feedback collected has been taken into account to improve service delivery. Furthermore, the measurement of user satisfaction is becoming detached from improvements in the quality management of institutions that provide services. Efforts to introduce the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) instrument in Kosovo institutions, which started in 2018, did not progress beyond some basic capacity building programs⁴¹. Other quality management tools have so far not been considered for introduction, while their application can contribute to improve both institutional management and the quality of public service delivery⁴².

The provision of public services is mainly done through traditional channels ((re)visits to offices or over the counter). This service delivery is often accompanied by demonstration of 'authority', formalities oriented towards administrative cultures⁴³, repeated interaction with multiple institutions⁴⁴, conditional payment of high costs before service delivery⁴⁵, non-refundable costs even if the service is refused or with unjustified conditioning of the service delivery upon execution of certain obligations, based on various legal and similar bases.⁴⁶ The principle "*once only*" through the "single point of contact" (established under LPGA), mean to bring about the change

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.25

⁴¹ CAF is a common instrument of quality management in the public sector in Europe and the WB region. For more, see <https://www.respaweb.eu/77/pages/10/rqmc>

⁴² i.e. ISO standardization in local administration proved very useful in improving service delivery

⁴³ A study associated with 5 selected services found that the documents for the application must be submitted personally by the applicants and that the completion of the forms drawn up by the institutions is mandatory and may result in the rejection of the application, "Analysis of case studies on the effectiveness of the provision of public administrative services", February 2021, EU Project for PAR-Support for Sectoral Reform Contract for Public Administration Reform.

⁴⁴ For example, obtaining a decision for early retirement due to work disability requires at least 8 physical visits to different institutions, *ibid*. p.37

⁴⁵ Payments are usually required to be made in cash and at various locations

⁴⁶ For example, to register a vehicle, all fines cited must be paid and evidence must be submitted to the registration center, although these are two different legal issues.

of behavior on the institutional side (through mutual coordination and cooperation) as well as the change of attitude of the civil servants towards a "service-oriented culture", is yet to be implemented. Users are still required to collect and submit various documents necessary for the provision of the service, even when such records are kept by the institution that provides the service originally requested. The exchange of information and data from public registers between institutions or even within one institution is more an exception rather than a rule.⁴⁷ All of these practices seriously disregard the principles and provisions of the LPAG and limit or otherwise affect users' access to the public service.

Several initiatives have been launched over the past five years to expand and facilitate access to services. "One stop shop" in the municipality of Prizren has not been made operational as there was no agreement between the central and local administration on exchange of data and many of the electronic kiosks faced functional and maintenance problems. The most significant progress has been recorded with digital services accessible through the e-Kosova portal. The portal is administered and managed by AIS and currently provides online access to over 130 public services with different levels of complexity, from information to online completion. Its potential and benefits have been recognized by the public especially during COVID-19 as it was the main point for scheduling vaccinations and registering for government financial support for citizens during the pandemic⁴⁸. The number of services that are available as well as the number of registered users is constantly increasing, thus confirming the user interest for this service delivery channel.⁴⁹ Further improvements and expanded use of digital services will go hand in hand with the expected introduction of digital signature and digital payments via the online platform, which will be implemented once the key elements of the Key Public Infrastructure (KIP) are in place.⁵⁰ User feedback enabled through the e-Kosova platform has proven useful in identifying gaps and should be used for the purposes of monitoring and further improvement. Recent measurements show that 60% of Kosovo citizens have switched to digital services during the pandemic and that 33% use online services to receive personal documents⁵⁴. Efforts to simplify services before digitization remain challenging. A PRAB aims to carry out administrative simplification of processes before their digitalization, it is expected that this will be addressed in a substantive way, in coordination with OPM, MIA and IPA in the process and targeted capacity building.

Although the national strategic document for persons with disabilities is still in effect, the access of this category of population to services is still limited in many aspects. This is mostly manifested in access to public buildings, but also in some electronic services⁵². To avoid the digital divide, the latest legislation on electronic identification guarantees access to all these online services for people with disabilities as well⁵³. Access to public services by minority communities is affected

⁴⁷ For example, Civil Status Office or the Consular Mission has no access to the Civil Status Register, although it belongs to the same institution (MIA), or the local authorities cannot access the Tax Administration registers or the Property Tax payment registers, or the Police or Court registers for persons who are under investigation, in judicial process or convicted, etc., *ibid.* p.8

⁴⁸ Overview of progress and challenges in the implementation of Public Administration Reform priorities for the period 2015-2020, p. 23

⁴⁹ 679,000 registered users (07.07.2020), compared to 384,000 in August 2021

⁵⁰ Law No. 08/L -022 on electronic identification and trust services in electronic transactions, 23.12.2021

⁵¹ % is the highest rate in the Western Balkans, Balkan Barometer 2022, p. 115

⁵² "There is poor oversight by the local government and few inspections of new constructions by the Building Inspectorate to ensure that specifications and standards are met – very often they are not. When efforts are made to improve accessibility retrospectively, very little consultation is done with disabled persons about proposed solutions, ending in poor results." SIGMA Monitoring Report for Kosovo 2021, pg. 130

⁵³ Article 4, Law No. 08/L -022 on electronic identification and trust services in electronic transactions, 23.12.2021

by the lack of consistent use of all official languages in public administration. This is particularly evident on the websites of institutions providing services.

6.3 Public Service and Human Resources Management

The drafting and approval of the PAR's legal package are considered important reform steps towards implementation of the SMPA⁵⁴. The main changes in the public service introduced by the Law on Public Officials (LPO) aimed to improve the legal and institutional framework for public service policies, merit-based employment and career development in the civil service, advancing HRM policies, including further improvements to training and professional development in the civil service. The Law on Salaries in the Public Sector (LSPS) aimed to create a transparent, unique and fair system of salaries for all employees in the public service of Kosovo. Both laws were challenged by the Constitutional Court (KCC) in 2019, which resulted in the complete annulment of the LSPS, while the LPO was declared partially unenforceable, specifically in relation to independent institutions⁵⁵. These judgments curtailed progress of the planned reforms particularly the reform of salaries system.

Since entry into effect of the LPO (June 2020), the MIA has been working on completing the legal framework by drafting and approving the required by-laws. To date, 12 regulations have been approved and four are under review⁵⁶. Four additional regulations need to be approved to complete the legal framework. As required under KCC Judgment, the MIA started changes to the LPO in 2021 and has gone beyond requirements laid out by KCC, by re-examining some essential issues of the civil and public service in order to complete the reform towards a public administration professional. This review is based on European and international best practices (n.b. there is no European Union directive for public administration).

Based on the provisions of the LPO, the Department for the Management of Public Officials (DMPO) is established as a central HRM structure in the public administration, with a much wider scope of responsibilities relative to its predecessor, the Department of Civil Service Administration (DCSA).⁶⁰ This change has not been accompanied by any plan for transformation of the DMPO, which would enable it to respond to its new role and responsibilities. Although there was a change of head of DMPO, due to stalled hiring of additional staff, weaknesses in internal management and ineffective performance of employees, the measure has not brought about the desired change. The DMPO is currently perceived as a major risk to the implementation of the LPO and this risk is likely to increase should weaknesses in DMPO persists and the department is unable to become fully operational. Although approved by the internal organization regulation, 11 positions still remain vacant (22 of 33 systematized positions).

⁵⁴ Law on Public Officials, Law on Salaries in the Public Sector, Law on the Organization and Operation of State Administration and Independent Agencies.

⁵⁵ <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=29923> AND <https://gjk-ks.org/decision/vleresim-i-kushtetutshmerise-se-ligjit-nr-06-l-111-perpagat-ne-sektorin-publik-3/>

⁵⁶ <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=25839> ⁶⁰ <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=36587>

Progress in the implementation of SMPA has been made with the development and introduction of Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS)⁵⁷. HRMIS consists of 3 modules: an employment database, an HRM module designed to be integrated with the payroll information system and a unique website for the recruitment, promotion and appointment of civil servants⁵⁸. HRMIS is used by all institutions⁵⁹. To date, HRMIS has been used entirely for recruitment and termination purposes, for transfer procedures and, to a large extent, for the administration of civil service leave days.⁶⁰ DMPO has successfully integrated HRMIS with the Pay System, while continuing activities that aim to ensure its connection with the attendance system, identity cards, training system and complaints system with the IOCCSK⁶¹. Currently, the recruitment procedures are carried out entirely in electronic form (from initiation of procedure to the appointment in position) along with procedures for termination of employment, transfer of employees, disciplinary measures, etc. The functionality of the HRMIS database is affected by institutions' reluctance and delays to provide accurate and up-to-date information in the system and this is an obstacle to regular reporting.⁶², while also diminishing transparency, as highlighted in the latest SIGMA monitoring report⁶³. Other challenges affecting the reporting by categories and classes of civil service positions refer to the remaining open issues regarding the determination of the status of public officials, the catalog of jobs and the classification of jobs.⁶⁸ The use of HRMIS is further affected by insufficient skills of staff related to HRMIS⁶⁴. Although the training program for personnel officers was held three times in 2021 (311 officers trained), its impact seems low and continued training for the future is recommended⁶⁵.

LPO promotes a merit-based recruitment that includes a centralized recruitment process, written testing of candidates through electronic tools, admission committees with a two-year mandate.⁶⁶. Over the past few years, HRMIS has been expanded with two additional applications:

- "Vacancy" for publication of and application to vacancies <https://konkursi.rks-gov.net>. This application provides a single access point for all information on civil and public service vacancies at central and local administration level, including information on various stages of the selection process in real time, as shown in the screenshot:

Figure 4: Screenshot of HRMIS recruitment module, date 22.07.2022

⁵⁷ An overview of the progress and challenges on the implementation of the public administration reform priorities for the period 2015-2020, MIA, 2022.

⁵⁸ Management of employees, recruitment, dismissal, transfer, suspension, organization, personnel planning, leave and discipline, draft Report on the state of the civil service 2021.

⁵⁹ An overview of the progress and challenges on the implementation of the public administration reform priorities for the period 2015-2020, MIA, 2022.

⁶⁰ I receive information through email from DMPO.

⁶¹ Report on the implementation of Public Administration Reform: Transitory Action Plan Plan 2021.

⁶² Draft Report on the state of the civil service 2021, MIA.

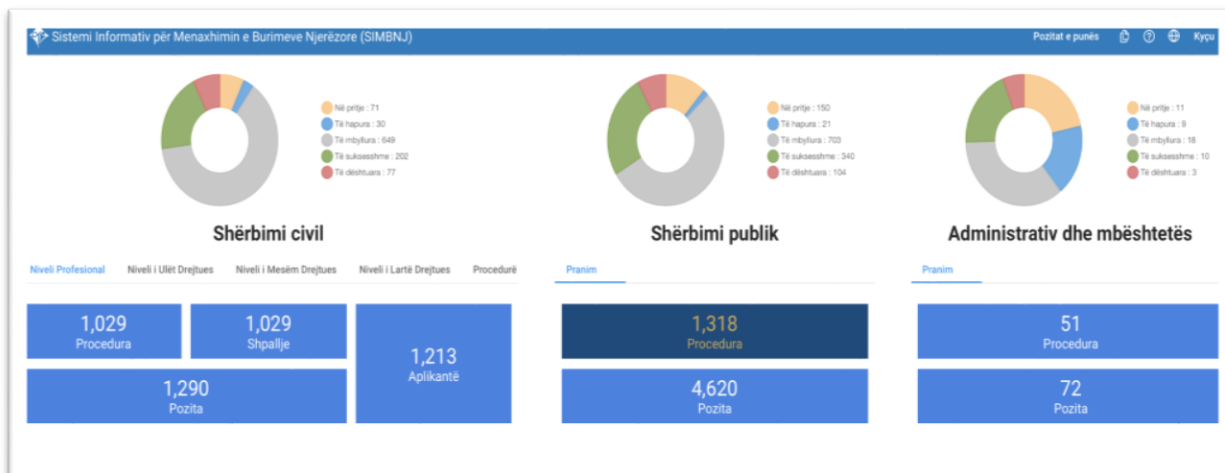
⁶³ SIGMA Monitoring Report - Principles of Public Administration - KOSOVO 2021. ⁶⁸

Draft Report on Civil Service Status 2021, MIA.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Report on the implementation of Public Administration Reform: Transitory Action Plan Plan 2021.



- "Testing" for testing and evaluating candidates. A bank of questions for electronic/written test, containing 1100 multiple choice questions and more than 100 interview questions, ready to be used by selection committees has been developed and is in use.

The implementation of the LPO has been facilitated so far by the tailored, modular training program, delivered by HRMU and DMPO through technical assistance to 130 civil servants. Based on the latest training needs assessment, additional support is required in terms of training on labor relations under the LPO, recruitment, promotion, performance appraisal and HRMIS.⁶⁷

Some external and internal factors have hindered the effective implementation of recruitment, including the uncertainty and delays in the process of aligning the LPO with the decision of the KCC, discrepancy of internal organization of institutions to the requirements of LFSAPA and delays in standardizing job descriptions based on the LPO. Inadequate capacities of DMPO also affected the effective implementation of centralized recruitment⁶⁸. The limited physical capacity of the only technically equipped test hall (maximum 15 candidates simultaneously) is unable to meet the needs of central and local level⁶⁹, nor deliver efficient and effective recruitment procedures⁷⁰. The competency framework is approved only for senior management positions, which allows for competency-based interviews required for specific positions. There is no similar framework for other categories of civil servants, which diminishes assurances of merit-based recruitment.

The personnel planning function is not yet fully utilized. On average, in the period from 2017/2020, 43% of all staffing plans were implemented. It appears that the lack of job classification and the incomplete jobs catalogue have also affected the staffing planning process. Alignment of the current jobs catalogue with the LPO is underway, slowed by ongoing delays in completing the internal organization and systematization of workplaces. Meanwhile, a guide and methodology for personnel planning has been prepared, in order to facilitate the process in line institutions. Further

⁶⁷ Medium-term training plan for civil servants (2022-2024).

⁶⁸ European Union: European Commission, working document of Commission staff, Kosovo* Report 2021.

⁶⁹ Draft Report on the state of the civil service 2021.

⁷⁰ An overview of the progress and challenges on the implementation of the public administration reform priorities for the period 2015-2020, MIA, 2022.

support is needed to build the capacities of HRMU staff for implementation of the regulation, instructions and methodology for personnel planning.

Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the rules and principles of the civil service legislation is carried out continuously by the IOCCSK. In this regard, additional guidelines for the implementation of the LPO may improve the supervision process. Organizational and human capacities for monitoring and reporting require further strengthening⁷¹.

With the cancellation of LSPS, the salary system in the public sector operates mainly based on two models: a coefficient-based salary system and a fixed salary system⁷². These systems do not guarantee full inclusion, transparency, fairness and equal treatment. Also, many special laws allow discretion on determination of salaries and allowances in institutions⁷³. The main guiding principle of LSPS of "equal pay for equal work" is yet to be attained. Many by-laws drafted for its implementation remain unused⁷⁴. The working group of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the drafting of the new law on salaries (LSPS) completed its assignment and the law has now completed the phase of preliminary and public consultations. The new law aims to introduce a common framework for salaries of all public employees as well as more specific rules for independent institutions. Its possible adoption and implementation will require by-laws and additional methodological guidelines, as well as specific support for capacity development. Possible changes to the LPO and LSPS will also require further adjustments to the job classifications and the job catalogue. Although the Regulation on job classifications has been approved, the classification of positions in institutions has not been completed, as most institutions are yet to harmonize and adopt their internal organization. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has approved the guidelines for standardization of job descriptions⁷⁵ and instructions for the process of reorganization of public institutions and systematization of employees, following restructuring of civil servants⁷⁶.

Based on LPO, KIPA is responsible for conducting training, research, professional development and capacity building for the civil service, while DMPO should approve and supervise implementation of training programs. The division of these responsibilities is not very clear⁷⁷. Training Needs Assessment (TNA) are not performed regularly. The last TNA was carried out in 2021 and served as the basis for the development of the Medium-Term Training Plan for Civil Servants (2022-2024). Although required by LPO, the regulation on training modules has not yet been approved, therefore the training system remains incomplete. Mandatory training programs defined by LPO for middle and lower level management, as well as the induction training programme are currently under development. The budget allocated for training and professional development is insufficient to raise the average quality of training programs and trainers, therefore KIPA also relies on donor assistance, to a certain extent. Almost half (148,622€) of the total KIPA

⁷¹ Meeting with the chairman of IOCCSK.

⁷² An overview of the progress and challenges on the implementation of the public administration reform priorities for the period 2015-2020, MIA, 2022.

⁷³ Draft Report on the state of the civil service 2021.

⁷⁴ Including the work to complete the methodology of job classification and salary calculation for all employees in the public sector, Draft Report on the state of the civil service 2020.

⁷⁵ Instruction No. 01/2022 on drafting job descriptions in civil service institutions, MIA.

⁷⁶ Instruction No. 02/2022 on the process of reorganization of public institutions and the systematization of employees following restructuring of civil servants, MIA.

⁷⁷ European Union: European Commission, working document of Commission staff - Kosovo Report 2021.⁸³
Annual work report: January 1 – December 31, 2021, KIPA.

budget (€301,156) in 2021 has been allocated for the budget line of goods and services, which also serves to pay for training expenses⁸³.

The performance evaluation system introduced by LPO is supported by the relevant Regulations and plays an important role civil service system. However, the system is still not functional as there is no effective performance management in the institutions⁷⁸. Individual performance objectives lack a connection to institutional objectives (plans) and a better link to training or capacity development needs. But there is also a need for greater commitment from managers to implement it consistently and less formally.

The future orientation of the development of the public service depends, to a considerable extent, on the result of the LPO and LSPS review, which is presently unknown. However, the general direction and development of public service and HRM policies will not deviate from the principles of public administration for EU candidates and potential candidates.

6.4 Accountability and Transparency

The reform in the field of accountability in the public administration has slowed down in recent years, despite the approval of the legal framework on organization and operation of the state administration and independent agencies (LOFSAIA)⁷⁹. Delays to the implementation of the law, issues associated with functioning of the Information and Privacy Agency (IPA) due to delays in the appointment of the Commissioner, absence of a pro-active approach to publication of public information, the weakening of the authority and importance of independent supervisory institutions (such as the Ombudsperson's Institution and the National Audit Office) have adversely affected reforms in this area. According to the latest monitoring report from SIGMA, the average in this area dropped from 2.6 in 2017 to 2.4 (out of 5) in 2021⁸⁰. The topics addressed under the accountability focus on the organization and functioning of the state administration, access to public documents, the proactive approach of institutions in publishing public information, as well as the right of citizens to a good administration, translated as responsiveness of public institutions towards implementing the recommendations of independent supervisory institutions. The implementation of the legal framework on public responsibility and the issues related to administrative conflicts are not dealt with under this document, as they are assessed as matters belonging to the judiciary, well outside of the scope of the state administration, therefore the Government cannot address them.

Main issues regarding the organization and operation of the state administration come from the poor implementation of LOFSAIA. The poor implementation of LOFSAIA is expressed through the poor harmonization of regulations on internal organization of ministries and agencies with the relevant law, the lack of implementation of performance management system as a means to strengthen the lines of accountability between ministries and agencies, lack of effectiveness of mechanisms for managerial accountability of agencies, weak implementation of streamlining of

⁷⁸ European Union: European Commission, working document of Commission staff - Kosovo Report 2021.

⁷⁹ Law No. 06 / L-113 on the Organization and Functioning of the State Administration and Independent Agencies: <https://bit.ly/3yj8LeA>

⁸⁰ SIGMA Monitoring Report, published in November 2021, p. 95: <https://bit.ly/3GflpO3>

agencies and lack of delineation of responsibilities regarding inspections and reorganization of inspection bodies at central and local level⁸¹.

In this context, only five (5) out of sixty-nine (69) institutions (ministries, regulatory and executive agencies) have harmonized their internal organization regulations with LOFSAIA to date, and no ministry or agency has started the implementation of the performance management system in line with LOFSAIA. The effectiveness of the basic mechanisms for managerial accountability is being undermined due to the failure to introduce a performance management system. Regarding streamlining of agencies, the Action Plan for streamlining agencies was approved by the Government in 2018, however, very little progress has been made so far⁸². The government has drafted two draft laws on streamlining of six agencies, four of which are subordinate to the Assembly and two subordinate to the Government. The reform of inspections started recently through harmonization of laws with the law on inspections is expected to clarify the division of responsibilities in inspection and reorganization of inspection bodies.

The new law on access to public documents entered into force in mid-2019. Oversight over implementation of this law has been entrusted to Information and Privacy Agency (IPA), which also supervises implementation of the Law on protection of personal data. The full functionality of the agency has been limited for a long time (almost three years) due to the delay in appointing the head of the agency, the Information Commissioner⁸⁹. According to the relevant law, IPA is second degree appeal body in cases where citizens have been denied (full or partial) access to public documents, however, some shortcomings identified in the Law on access to public documents may affect the full effectiveness of IPA in supervising implementation of this law. According to SIGMA report, these shortcomings relate to the mandate of the IPA to carry out *ex officio* inspections of institutions to assess compliance with transparency requirements and the right to request information and documents from public institution to assess whether the denial of access to public information was in accordance with the law. Also, the catalog of sanctions against violators of the right to access public documents contains generalizations of actions and thus can cause issues due to different interpretations (for example, it is not entirely clear whether the IPA can cite a 'fine' to an institution that fails to submit an annual report on access to public documents to IPA)⁸³.

In 2021, a total of 7,561 requests for access to public documents were recorded, full access was granted to 7,408, partial access was granted to 46 requests while another 95 requests were rejected⁸⁴. On the other hand, of the total number of 162 public institutions required to report to IPA, only 97 reported, while 59 have failed to report⁸⁵. Regarding the proactive approach to publishing information through official websites, public institutions have been less transparent compared to the 2017 assessment by SIGMA. According to the same report, "the assessment of the official websites of some public institutions has unveiled serious issues in the proactive approach to the publication of data, such as plans and annual reports, budget and others"⁹³. In this

⁸¹ Law No. 08/L-067 on Inspections: <https://bit.ly/3P9Qasr>

⁸² Action plan for streamlining of agencies, June 2018: <https://bit.ly/3AwjncZ> ⁸⁹ The Assembly has appointed the Information Commissioner in May 2021.

⁸³ Monitoring Report, SIGMA, p. 103.

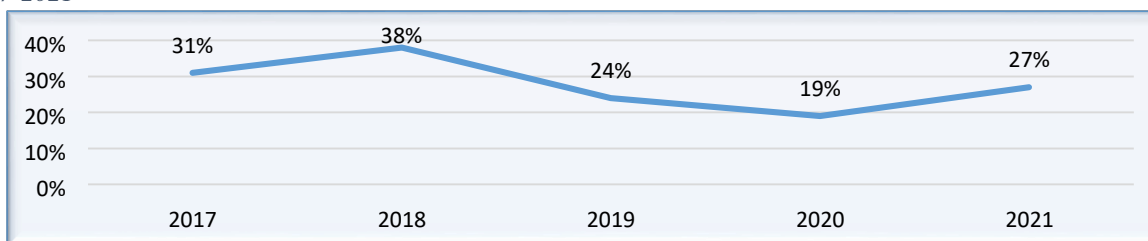
⁸⁴ Information and Privacy Agency, Annual Report 2021, p. 24: <https://bit.ly/3bNivGr>

⁸⁵ All public institutions at the central and local level are required to report to IPA on annual basis, Article 31, Law No. 06/L-081 on Access to Public Documents: <https://bit.ly/3P8dlmO> ⁹³ Monitoring Report, SIGMA, p. 101.

regard, a similar conclusion was also made in the 2019/2020 public administration reform monitoring report, which found that "civil society continues to be dissatisfied with public institutions in terms of allowing access to public documents. Only 9.3% of organizations agreed that public institutions allow access to documents of public importance".⁸⁶

Implementation of Ombudsman's recommendations by public institutions in 2021 improved compared to 2020, however, the general situation shows that the situation in this aspect remains challenging. Also, although the implementation of NAO recommendations increased in 2020 (at 40%) compared to previous years, it is still remains below the regional average, which is 55%.

Figure 5: Implementation of the Ombudsperson Institution's recommendations by public institutions for the period 2017-2021



The main challenges in this area are related to issues identified above. The first challenge is the organization and operation of the state administration with clear lines of accountability between ministries and agencies, including the implementation of the performance management system. This challenge is to be addressed through the implementation of LOFSAIA and the monitoring of its implementation. Streamlining of agencies is another challenge that needs to be addressed, as there is institutional resistance to streamlining from agencies. The action plan for streamlining agencies must be updated and a political commitment/will of the Government and the Assembly must be secured.

The second challenge is related to increasing access to public documents. The number of requests for access to public documents that receive a positive response should increase, along with compliance of institutions with their required reporting to IPA. Unless all institutions report to IPA annually, there cannot be a clear and complete overview of streamlining of right to access public documents. On the other hand, public institutions will be encouraged to pro-actively publish basic information such as internal organization, management, budget, plans and performance reports through their websites.

The right of citizens to good governance must be ensured through increased implementation of Ombudsperson recommendations. Although there has been progress in the rate of implementation of recommendations in 2021 relative to 2020, the compliance rate remains below the desired level. The implementation of recommendations from ministries should be monitored by the Government, and cooperation of the Government with the Assembly in this regard should be strengthened.

⁸⁶ Group for Legal and Political Studies, Monitoring of PAR in Kosovo (2019/2020), p. 7: <https://bit.ly/3lzZklvv>

7. VISION AND STRATEGIC AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF PARS 2022-2027

The vision of the PAR Strategy of the Republic of Kosovo is an efficient and effective public administration that serves the public interest, meets the needs of citizens and businesses, and successfully completes the EU membership process, supporting democracy and the rule of law.

To achieve this vision reforms and improvements are needed to ensure further democratization, economic development and successful membership of the Republic of Kosovo at international level, including in particular support for EU Membership and the development of administrative capacities to perform successfully within the EU. For these purposes, the horizontal management systems in the public administration require improvements, while the overall performance of the public administration should increase significantly.

Public administration uses (scarce) public resources and must be held accountable for both performance and results. Its organization and work processes must be standardized, efficient and streamlined down to entrusted roles, functions and responsibilities. The performance management system must be established at the institutional and organizational level and linked to the individual goals, so that progress and contribution can be objectively monitored and measured. The transparency of its actions and results, proactive communication and opening public issues to the public are the guiding principles that will increase trust in governance. The government will continue to build a policy development system that will ensure participatory, transparent and effective processes, while the administration remains responsible for ensuring that decisionmakers are fully and properly informed during policy planning, development and implementation. The economic development of the country should not be affected by government regulations, therefore administrative barriers and burdens to business should be analyzed and lifted or reduced, while new obstacles should be prevented. Taxpayers, citizens and businesses deserve treatment and services of much higher standards and better protection of their rights against the voluntary or discretionary powers of the administration. The service-oriented administrative culture must evolve from the bureaucratic mindset and attitude. Achieving these objectives requires simplification and streamlining administrative processes, along with awareness campaigns, broad dialogue with socio-economic partners and skills development. Government and public administration cannot afford delays in the deployment and use of new technologies in the operation and delivery of its services, as they will elevate their work efficiency and interaction with service users to a completely new level. New digital communication channels that offer additional opportunities to multiply service delivery modalities are widely used in the private sector, and the public sector needs to learn and adopt similar approach, avoiding the digital divide. To implement this vision and these objectives, professional, impartial and competent civil and public service employees are necessary.

The PARS 2022-2027 set an overall medium-term objective for each horizontal system or targeted priority area that illustrates the main direction of reforms. The general objectives of the PARS are defined as separate strategic objectives under Good Governance pillar (NDS 2030) that serve their operationalization.

Each general objective is aggregated into groups of specific objectives under the same priority area. Unlike the general objectives, the specific objectives of the PARS are usually defined for the short term and provide more specific expected results with the implementation of the required activities and actions.

The activities required to achieve these specific objectives are listed in the action plan that defines actions and objectives for years 2022-2024. Based on the mid-term assessment for this period, a new action plan will identify actions and objectives for the next three years, i.e. 2025 – 2027.

7.1 Policy Planning and Coordination

7.1.1 General Objective 1: Results-oriented policy planning and coordination

A substantial part of this priority area is operationalization of the framework for strategic planning and management, which means that once a clear hierarchy of strategic documents is established, they are managed in a way that ensures best implementation and reporting.

To attain increased performance, transparency, and institutional accountability, the institutions and officials responsible for the implementation, monitoring, and reporting of objectives and activities need to be determined. The intention is to also ensure that the Government's Strategic and Operational Plans remain the only channel for implementation, monitoring and reporting on Government's priorities, including transparency.

A major achievement in the improvement of policy planning and coordination is the improvements to informed decision-making based on established and improved institutional mechanisms, as well as their improved correlation with EU legislation.

Indicator	Basis	Target 2027
Quality of policy planning <i>Source: SIGMA</i>	2021 (2.5 out of 5)	3.5/5
Essential functions of the government's centre institutions are discharged. <i>Source: SIGMA</i>	2021 (4 out of 5)	5/5

7.1.1.1 Specific objective 1: Effective and integrated policy planning system

This specific objective intends to address shortcomings in the strategic framework by establishing a clear hierarchy of strategic documents, determine priority sectors based on Kosovo's needs for meaningful sectoral policies, as well as determine hierarchy of objectives, from national to institutional. These reforms aim to improve the coordination systems for planning, drafting,

implementation, monitoring and reporting on implementation of strategic documents. Therefore, legal strengthening of integrated planning mechanisms, support through human capacities, as well as decision-making of these mechanisms based on a specific calendar are required.

Also, this specific objective intends to achieve alignment of strategic documents based on the hierarchy to be established through the planned amendment of the Government's work regulation. Accomplishment and improvements of this specific objective are based on the assumption that this regulation will be completed and amended based on analysis carried out by the Government in relation to National Strategic Management Framework (NSMF). Based on this analysis set out in NSMF, the regulation will present a genuine hierarchy where long-term strategies such as the National Development Plan (NDP) will be at the top of this hierarchy, along with key European Agenda documents. The hierarchy will improve interconnection of strategic documents, merge the excessive number of strategic documents spanning several ministries, and reduce the need to produce new strategic documents, as the required strategic documents will be aligned with the sectors, as established in NDP - one or two per sector. Thus, the revised system will lead to a better coordination of decision-making for defining the scope of new strategies, drafting, content, implementation, monitoring and reporting on strategic documents.⁹⁵

As a logical consequence of the amendment of the Government's Rules of Procedure, the amendment of the administrative instruction 07/2018 on planning and drafting of strategic documents and action plans is also completed. This addition - change will allow better horizontal and vertical interconnection of these documents but also avoid overlap of strategic documents. This ensures greater implementation of harmonized documents, and focusing of administrative and financial resources.

An additional issue that requires the attention of decision-makers is also foresight planning, as a very important process, especially considering the major global changes and their continuous and growing impact on Kosovo. The government currently has no such mechanism in place, except for economic aspects, therefore such a mechanism, with sufficient resources, able to make such plans on annual basis or as needed, is necessary.

Indicator	Basis	Target 2027
% of sectoral strategies adopted with minimal content. ⁹⁶	2021 (66%)	95%
Source: SPO - Annual Report		

7.1.1. 2 Specific objective 2: Increase institutional performance, transparency and accountability

This objective aims to address shortcomings identified in relation to SIPPC 2017-2021 implementation rate, such as drafting and publication of annual reports on implementation of strategic documents, the level of alignment of SPO activities with key policy documents, and their implementation .

An essential element of this objective is the establishment of the Framework for management and strategic planning, which means strengthening the performance management system to enable enhanced responsibility and accountability, defining the institutions and officials responsible for each objective and activity.

Also, this objective intends to improve implementation of the government's annual commitments through establishment of the Strategic and Operational Plan (SOP) as the only channel for generating information on implementation of the government's priorities and the entire policy agenda, but also as the only reporting channel for government work (NDP, sector strategies,

⁹⁵ For more, see the internal document drafted by the Strategic Planning Office "Draft proposal on National Strategic Management Framework in Kosovo".

⁹⁶ There are no comprehensive estimates on the % of strategies adopted with minimal content. SIGMA's evaluations rate this indicator at 4/6 in 2021. Taking into account that 4/6 is 66.6%, for the purposes of this document a rate of 66% will be adopted for 2021, based on SIGMA estimates.

programs and plans). An additional element is the need for and public access to various government reports and documents in order to improve transparency through public access, as well as the accountability of government institutions responsible for implementation of various policy documents.

Indicator	Basis	Target 2027
% of adopted strategies for which annual reports have been prepared and published <i>Source:</i> SPO, Annual Report on PVDS	2021 (14%)	95%
% of total commitments carried over to subsequent years (EI laws, strategies and commitments) <i>Source:</i> GCS (Government Coordination Secretariat), Annual - Report on PVPQ	2021 (25%)	5%

7.1.1. 3 Specific Objective 3: Strengthening the regulatory impact assessment process and better connection of legislation with the EU *Acquis*

This objectives intends to improve the quality of the impact assessment of new policies that are designed and proposed for approval by the government, to ensure that government's decisions are based on knowledge (in the form of policy analyses), data, statistics, and consultations with the public and stakeholders and with other requirements arising from the Government Rules of Procedure (GRP).

Therefore, an improved assessment should be created in accordance with the Government's Rules of Procedure, other relevant legal acts that regulate the process, such as AI No. 03/2013 and the Guidelines and Manual for Development of Concept Documents. This also requires a better coordination at the center of the Government in order to establish a better and viable control related to impact assessment of new policies.

Improved assessment associated with drafting the new legislation, as well as better coordination between the mechanisms of the Government Center on the one hand and ministries on the other, will improve alignment of legislation with the EU *Acquis* as well.

Indicator	Basis	Target 2027
annual % of laws that are in line with the option recommended in the concept paper. ⁸⁷ <i>Source:</i> GCS/LD – Report on the implementation of SOP/Report on implementation of the Legislative Agenda	2021 (0%)	80%
Number of public officials trained for (1) concept documents, (2) drafting of legislation, (3) evaluation <i>ex-post</i> of legislation, (4) alignment of legal acts with <i>Acquis</i> of the EU and for (5) consolidation of legal acts <i>Source:</i> KIPA – Annual training report	2021 1. 19 2. 0 3. 38 4. 28 5. 0	 1. >150 2. >150 3. >150 4. >150 5. >150
Number of consolidated primary and secondary legal acts <i>Source:</i> Unit responsible for consolidation – Annual report of consolidated legal acts and publication of consolidated legal acts in the Official Gazette	2021 0	>100
Better regulation through the repeal of by-laws approved by the government, which have no legal basis <i>Source:</i> The decision of the Government to repeal the sub-legal acts approved by the Government which have no legal basis and the minutes of the government meeting at which such decision was approved. SBS	2022 (0)	N/A

7.2 Service delivery

⁸⁷ This indicator refers to the findings and recommendations of SIGMA (*Monitoring report*, 2021, p. 28-29), on quality control to ensure that the findings and analyses during the regulatory impact assessment are taken into account and reflected in the legislation that follows as an option recommended in the concept document.

7.2.1 General Objective 2: Providing high quality services

Delivery of services and in particular their efficiency, quality, accessibility and affordability is of great importance to the whole society and is also the most visible area of PAR to the public. The level of user satisfaction and the specific experience of public service delivery usually determines the users' perception of the culture, performance, competences and general quality of the public administration, and this is why it should be afforded special attention under this reform.

The main reform measures set out a comprehensive policy agenda for service delivery, including a harmonized legislative framework and a coherent approach to administrative simplification and removal of administrative burdens for citizens and businesses. Clarity of institutional and leadership roles and responsibilities for development of policies related to public administrative services and monitoring their implementation, as well as necessary structures for a coordinated and harmonized approach to improving service delivery will be defined and guided through legal changes at government level. Increasing cooperation and coordination between different institutions involved in delivery of services, regular exchange of data between their registers and digitalization of these registers will facilitate integration of services and pave the way for a simplified approach to services, both online and physically. Special attention will be paid to improving the quality of public services, which also require behavioral changes in the administration and further capacity development. Similarly, government efforts to simplify service delivery procedures must be complemented by structured user engagement in these simplification processes.

The general objective of this priority area of the PARS derives from the strategic objective Good Governance under NDP 2030, which aims to improve the quality of service delivery to citizens and businesses. Progress will be assessed on the extent to which the administration is citizenoriented, whether quality and access to public services are integrated into policies and how they are implemented. For these purposes, SIGMA's indicator that measures the implementation of the four (4) Principles of Public Administration in service delivery is being established to monitor progress⁹⁸. In the last SIGMA Monitoring Report on Kosovo (2021), the base 2.5 was estimated, while NDP sets the intermediate goal of 3.5 by 2026 and the final goal of 4.5 by 2030.

Improved quality of service delivery will be achieved by building services oriented towards citizens and businesses through a series of coherent and complementary reform measures that will focus on facilitating access to services and ensuring their quality, while ensuring an approach of harmonized, sufficient administrative capacities, institutional leadership and inter-institutional coordination throughout the Government. The latter is an essential prerequisite for addressing deficiencies and challenges identified through a structured and whole-government approach and is therefore considered a fundamental priority.

Indicator	Basis	Target 2027
Increase quality of policy development and service delivery for citizens and businesses	2021 (average: 2.5 out of 5)	3.5

Source: NDP ⁹⁹		
Satisfaction with administrative services provided by central institutions	3 (2021) out of 5	4
Source: The Balkan Barometer		

7.2.1.1 Specific Objective 1: Harmonization and reorganization of service delivery

The service delivery policy framework will be completed with the development and adoption of the NDS 2030, this PAR strategy, the program for reducing the administrative burden (PRAB) and the e-government strategy, all scheduled for adoption by the end of 2022. The main objectives of this strategic framework are to implement and promote the basic principles of service delivery (i.e. ‘once only’, single points of contact) and to improve the quality and access to services, specific measures of the ABR program will be foreseen to reduce the administrative burden through administrative simplification, re-engineering of procedures and digitalization. In addition to measures aimed at the current stock of service procedures and processes, the ABR program will also provide mechanisms to control and prevent the introduction of new burdens with changes to current or new legislation. The efficiency of service delivery will be strongly supported and facilitated by further investments in ICT infrastructure and in particular by increasing the number of institutions connected to the Government Gateway Platform, interaction between registries, completion of digital signature and digital payment infrastructure, thus enabling more intensive digitalization of services. More specific measures and actions will be addressed by the future e-government strategy. Coherence and consistency of objectives, measures and reform activities will be ensured both during the development of these planning documents and their implementation and monitoring.

⁹⁸ The policy for citizen-oriented state administration is in force and being implemented; Good administration is a main policy objective that supports delivery of public services, approved by relevant legislation and consistently implemented in practice; The mechanisms for ensuring quality of public service have been established; Ensuring access to public services, Principles of Public Administration for EU candidate countries and potential candidates, SIGMA

⁹⁹ This indicator is also used in the National Development Strategy

Sustainable implementation of the LGAP will be supported by several interventions, including by building knowledge and competences of civil servants at both central and local administration. Additional communication and awareness raising will be undertaken to promote the principles of service delivery (‘once only’, single points of contact) that are critical to understanding the expected transition to an administrative culture of citizen-oriented services. In this respect, cooperation with CSOs and other social and international partners can be of particular benefit. In addition, training programs tailored to customer relations will be developed, targeting help desk personnel at both central and local administration. Measures will be taken to support the MIA in providing a functional help desk service for the implementation of the LGAP. A close cooperation between different institutions involved in providing services through single points of contact is required and therefore possible modalities of such cooperation will be explored to identify some standard models applicable for cooperation of central institutions, but also between central and

local administration. Lessons learned from previous experience in establishing single points of contact at municipal level will be the starting point.

Alignment of special legislation with the provisions of the LGAP should be given a new impetus. Given the complexity, extent and importance of this exercise for improving service delivery, but also for ensuring legal harmonization between positive legal provisions and thus ensuring legal security and legitimate rights of users of administrative services, the action plan for the harmonization of the LGAP will be developed for review and approval by the Government. This plan will, among others, specify the responsible institution, timeline, priorities and government (inter-institutional) mechanisms for harmonizing specific laws with the provisions of the LGAP. Modalities, structures and timeframe for harmonization of by-laws will also be proposed. It is very important to make sure that the plan is aligned and coordinated with the ABR Action Plan to avoid overlap in review of the legal process. Similar to the aim of the ABR program to introduce a control mechanism that will prevent the inclusion of contradictory provisions in new legislation, a certain model of compliance control will be proposed for supplementing and amending legislation. The uniform approach to the harmonization process throughout the administration will be ensured through development and distribution of methodological instructions or guidelines, accompanied by the support of the tailored training program. For this purpose, the communication and awareness activities that are planned to support the implementation of the LGAP will also include the harmonization of the LGAP and will aim to particularly facilitate the thematic dialogue Government - Ministry - Parliament.

Indicator	Basis	Target 2027
Number of special laws harmonized with LGAP. <i>Source: MIA</i>	2022 (49)	231
% of trained front office staff on customer relations.	2022 (0)	>100

7.2.1. 2 Specific Objective 2: Strengthening the central institutional leadership and coordination

The profound change in the quality of services to citizens, businesses and institutions has been set as the main priority of the government in its 4-year programme⁸⁸. The comprehensive and crosssectoral nature of the services requires a common approach, common understanding, broad coordination at the government level and lead institution(s) empowered to direct, lead, monitor and report on reform progress. For this purpose, changes and improvements will be made to regulatory and organizational framework that defines all these issues. This means clarifying and streamlining roles and responsibilities of institutions and their organizational units involved in various aspects of policy development, policy implementation, management and quality control or in monitoring and reporting on service delivery reform (i.e. MIA: AIS, OPM: SPO, LD, GCS).

⁸⁸ The Program of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo 2021-2025, May 2021, p.20

The internal organization of MIA, AIS and OPM will be developed in coordination and will specify the roles and responsibilities of their organizational units in terms of service delivery to avoid any overlap or duplication, but also to ensure that all relevant functions related to service delivery (from policy development to monitoring and evaluation to new policy initiatives) are properly addressed. This will also include the organization and establishment of a compliance control function aimed at reviewing new legal initiatives against the requirements of the LGAP and bylaws prior to their adoption. It should include both laws and by-laws. This function will also be recognized in the internal organization and legislation approval procedures. Similarly, *ex ante* evaluation of service delivery policy should be introduced into the policy development cycle in order to prevent the introduction of administrative burdens into new legislation.

The inter-institutional functional structure will also be created at the operational level to ensure the coordination and cooperation of all actors in delivery of services. This structure will primarily ensure a coordinated approach to planning and implementation of PARS, RBA and e-government objectives and activities. For this purpose, support for capacity development will be provided. For this purpose, the communication and awareness activities that will be developed as part of the first specific objective will also expand and support this specific objective, especially in relation to the dialogue between Government - Ministry - Parliament.

Indicator	Basis	Target 2027
% of concept documents and draft laws checked for alignment with LGAP <i>Source: OPM/MIA</i>	2022 (0%)	100%
Annual frequency of meetings of inter-institutional coordinating structures on PARS, PRAB and e-government <i>Source: OPM/MIA</i>	2022 (0)	4

7.2.1. 3 Specific Objective 3: Increase quality of delivery of services

Quality aspects of service delivery will be given more attention in the future as it is one of the most important features for users. To improve quality in service delivery, service providers need to learn about users' experiences and needs. To this end, service delivery standards will be introduced and regularly evaluated through user satisfaction measurement, where user feedback will inform policies to improve service delivery. This process assumes that there is a consolidated and up-to-date overview and statistics on services provided by the central and local administration. Such an overview should also serve as an analytical basis for standardization of services, the systematic simplification of service provision, identification and removal of administrative burdens and, finally, for preparation of services for digitalization, which would improve the quality of service provision. For this purpose, the current list of services will be updated and improved with

additional elements and institutional responsibility for its administration and updating will be specified. Codified standard guidelines will support service delivery, including delivery of digitalized services in a standardized and uniform manner across the administration and personalized staff capacity development will be organized and provided. Another measure that will enable quality improvements concerns the standardization of public registers maintained by different institutions, such as the register of taxpayers, the civil register, the register of vehicles, the register of businesses, the register of criminal history, etc. The standardization of public registers will enable extensive digitalization that will further empower and facilitate the exchange of data between institutions, especially through its integration with the Government Gateway Platform. These changes will lead to increased quality and efficiency of service delivery.

User satisfaction with service delivery and its quality should also be considered for purposes of administrative simplification or reduction of burden and ultimately for service (re)design. Communication and promotion of such a practice should be increased among the institutions that provide services and this will lead to an increase in the number of institutions that introduce user surveys in its regular operation. Service delivery standards will thus include the modalities, methods and frequency of collecting user feedback. Good practices in the analysis of collected user feedback data and their inclusion in service design will be identified and promoted to spread its application. Once this process is widely implemented, a study will be conducted to identify and design possible participatory mechanisms that enable direct user input into service delivery reengineering, and such a mechanism, before being rolled out, will be piloted on a smaller number of services. Based on this experience, guidelines and methodologies for optimizing service delivery with user participation will be developed and disseminated.

The quality in the provision of services is also influenced by the quality of the organization and the performance of the institution that provides the service. Continuous improvements in the organization and performance of the institution can clearly contribute to the quality and efficiency of service delivery. Therefore, in central administration institutions, the gradual introduction of the quality management - the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), which also includes the dimension of customer relations, is expected.⁸⁹ The introduction of CAF is highly recommended for institutions that offer a larger number of services or services on a larger scale, although its introduction is on a voluntary basis. Promotional activities will be organized to communicate the benefits and advantages of introducing Total Quality Management Tools, including CAF, for improved customer relations⁹⁰.

Indicator	Basis	Target 2027
Number of standardized and digitalized public registers	2022 (0)	10
Source: MIA (AIS)		

⁸⁹ "The model is based on the premise that excellent results in organizational performance, citizens/customers, people and society are achieved through strategy and executive planning of leadership, people, partnerships, resources and processes. It looks at the organization from different perspectives at the same time; a political approach to organizational performance analysis", <https://www.eupan.eu/caf/>

⁹⁰ Total Quality Management and Business Excellence, <https://www.eipa.eu/publication/total-quality-management-business-excellence/>

Number of central institutions using the common assessment framework (KPV)	2022 (0)	10
<i>Source: MIA</i>		

7.2.1. 4 Specific Objective 4: Increase access to and efficiency of service delivery

Increasing access to public services and multiplying service delivery channels towards digital services are among the main priorities of the government reform⁹¹. The consistent implementation of the principles and provisions of the LGAP, the simplification of service provision and the removal of administrative burdens will facilitate improved access to services, while their digitalization will enable delivery of more inventive services through new channels and will increase efficiency of delivery. For this purpose, current practices that affect access to services, such as unreasonable costs or conditioning services with other financial obligations, must be reviewed and removed wherever they are found to be unreasonable and contrary to the principles and general provisions of the procedure administrative. The communication and promotion activities planned under the first specific objective will also extend to the promotion of serviceoriented administration performance. To facilitate access to services through the traditional channel, at least three multi-functional centers will be established for citizens, based on the LGAP concept of Single Point of Contact. Services that require the engagement of at least three institutions will be organized in the centre, while the exact scope, priorities and needs for territorial coverage in the country will be determined by an analysis to be carried out for this purpose. OPM and MIA will lead, coordinate and support cooperation agreements between relevant institutions and will ensure the establishment and functionality of inter-institutional teams that will be responsible for optimizing and simplifying the service delivery process, evaluating organizational changes, personnel, budget or other necessary changes and assessment of digitalization opportunities. The whole process will be supported by a broad public campaign that aims to inform society about the obligations of institutions and the corresponding rights of service users in administrative procedures, as set out in the legislation on general administrative procedures.

The standardization of public services and registers, the institutional strengthening and capacity building of AIS and further investments in ICT infrastructure, including the Government Gateway Platform, will facilitate continuous digitalization and increase the number of digital services. This will also include advancing to more sophisticated levels of service delivery that will be enabled by the introduction of digital signature and digital payments. Until such time, alternative authentication modes in electronic communication will be researched and analyzed so as to allow online service delivery.¹⁰⁴ The review of the service delivery process aimed at optimization (removing unnecessary steps, administrative burdens or other measures) will be carried out before digitalization of services, in accordance with the RAB Program and timeframe of its action plan.

⁹¹ Programme of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo 2021-2025, May 2021, p.20/21 ¹⁰⁴ Paragraph 4 of Article 47 and Article 158 of LGAP

These activities will be closely coordinated by inter-institutional structures set out under specific objective 2. More institutions that offer online services will gradually connect to the e-Kosova platform in order to elevate it to as a single web portal for all services. In parallel and closely related to the measures under priority area of Accountability and Transparency hereunder, the proactive communication policy of all institutions will be supported and promoted, particularly provision of all relevant information about services through websites of institutions.

Access to services for special groups of the population will be improved and special attention will be paid to the strict implementation of legal guarantees that all electronic services will be available to persons with disabilities (Braille alphabet, voice translator, etc.)⁹². Public campaigns and awareness-raising activities will be organized to support easier physical access to public institutions for this category of population, in cooperation with the relevant authorities and civil society associations.

Access to public services by minority communities, whether physical or virtual, will be improved by the strict implementation of legal requirements on the use of official languages. One option being considered is allocating specific budget to the Office of the Language Commissioner, dedicated solely to translation purposes for the minority community.

Indicator	Basis	Target 2027
The number of sophisticated digitalized services on the digitalKosova portal.	2022 (0)	95%

7.3 Public Service and Human Resources Management

7.3.1 General Objective 3: Professional Public Service and Human Resources Management.

The strategic objective in the area of Public Service and HRM aims to continue reforms for development of effective and efficient public service built on a merit-based system that provides equal opportunities for all, motivates, promotes, rewards professionalism and enables continuous professional development of public service employees. This strategic objective will directly contribute to the achievement of the development goal "Effective and accountable government" defined in the National Development Strategy (NDS) 2030; specifically, it will contribute to the achievement of the NDS strategic objective "Increasing the effectiveness of public service and accountability in public administration".

In the next five years, a number of measures to achieve specific objectives in the area of public service and HRM are planned, which will result in: (a) improved legal and institutional framework in the public service; (b) application the principles of professionalism, meritocracy, efficiency and equal opportunities for employment in the public service; (c) build and implement a fair salaries

⁹² Article 4 of the Law No. 08/L -022 on electronic identification and trusted services in electronic transactions

system in the public service; and (d) improve professional capacities of public service employees. Implementation of measures and achievement of specific objectives under the priority area "Public Service and HRM" will enhance professionalism and effectiveness of the public service and will therefore contribute to effective governance in Kosovo.

Indicator	Base 2021	Target 2027
Public service and human resources management ⁹³	3	4
Source: SIGMA		

7.3.1. 1 Specific Objective 1: The legal and institutional framework for public service has improved

In the short term, the objective focuses on measures to improve the legal framework and strengthen the main mechanisms and systems for implementation and monitoring of public service policies.

After completing and amending the LPO, measures will be taken to support complementing and completing secondary legislation. This will include assessing the applicability of current by-laws and identifying the need for other by-laws. In this way, the current sub-legal acts that need to be aligned with the amendments of the LPO will be identified, along with an understanding whether new sub-legal acts need to be developed. This alignment with the LPO and drafting of new sublegal acts will improve and complete the legal framework in public service and will enable their sustainable implementation. In order to allow efficient implementation and monitoring of this legal framework, the structural and organizational capacities of the DMPO will be strengthened. DMPO will be complemented with necessary staff and their competence and skills will be developed. This measure will enable the creation of a clear and professional structure to function as a coordinating mechanism for implementation and monitoring of public service policies.

This objective also aims to improve HRMIS by enabling its more advanced interaction with other systems. Further updates will be made to HRMIS to create a stable and efficient instrument for collection and publication/reporting of data on public officials, in accordance with the legislation in effect. The capacities of the HRMU staff on the use of HRMIS will be developed, including for entering, updating and managing personnel data. As a result of these measures, the collection and publication of accurate and qualitative data for public officials employed in the public service will be improved.

Finally, the results achieved under these measures will improve the legal and institutional framework that will enable the implementation and sustainable monitoring of policies and laws

⁹³ The description of the indicator is adjusted based on the average value of all indicators for area of public service and human resource management according to SIGMA principles of Public Administration

that affect the development and competences of the public service and effective management of human resources..

Indicator	Base 2021	Target 2027
% of by-laws that have been approved by the Government for the implementation of the LPO <i>Source: MIA</i>	75%	100%
The central structure responsible for the coordination and monitoring of policies in the public service has been established, staffed, the staff is trained and the structure is functional. <i>Source: MIA</i>	1	3

7.3.1. 2 Specific Objective 2: The public service applies the principles of professionalism, meritocracy, efficiency and equal opportunities

Achieving this objective by the end of 2026 will allow the public service to be perceived as an attractive employer, which understands well the personnel needs for public administration institutions, applies the principles of professionalism, merit and equal opportunities for all categories of public service employees.

First, prerequisites for achieving this objective will be created. Measures will be taken to complete the standardization of job descriptions and adapt to the new legal changes, update the jobs catalog, increase infrastructural capacity for electronic written testing of candidates as well as improve and further supplement the questions bank to include more professional questions for specific groups.

In order to enable the effective implementation of recruitment planning procedures, measures will be taken to further improve competences and skills. This includes preparation and holding of advanced trainings for HRMU staff and managerial staff on the implementation of the regulation, guide and personnel planning methodology.

Measures will be taken to promote the public service as a desirable employer. This includes developing and conduct information campaigns on recruitment process at central and local level public through video animations.

The competency framework will be developed and put into use. This framework will serve as a guide for conducting professional interviews and will be used during the recruitment process to verify skills and select the best candidates. This framework will facilitate the recruitment process and help institutions to implement meritocracy in the public service.

Advanced capacity building programs will be developed and organized for HRMU staff and management staff related to all innovations under LPO, including: recruitment, performance appraisal, professional development and termination of employment in the public service. Also, in order to improve the implementation of recruitment procedures, training programs will be developed and organized for the members of the admission commissions.

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the implementation of HRM procedures is essential to ensure that the public service applies the principles of professionalism, meritocracy, efficiency and equal opportunities. For this purpose, measures will be taken to improve procedures and guidelines on monitoring public administration institutions in regard to implementation of rules and principles of civil service legislation. Also, the organizational and human capacities of IOCCSK will be further developed to monitor and report on the implementation of these rules and principles.

These measures will result in the creation of a recruitment system that guarantees the selection of the most qualified candidates, a system that supports the implementation of the principles of professionalism, meritocracy, efficiency and equal opportunities in public service, and will contribute towards building professional public service and effective management of human resources.

Indicator	Base 2021	Target 2027
% of surveyed citizens who believe that employment in the public sector is based on merit <i>Source: UNDP - Public Pulse</i>	24% ⁹⁴	60%
% of complaints related to vacancies upheld by IOCCSK during a year <i>Source: IOCCSK</i>	15.6% ⁹⁵	5%

7.3.1. 3 Specific Objective 3: A fair, transparent and equitable salary system has been established and is implemented in practice

This objective aims to improve the salary system in the public service by creating a transparent and fair salary system that retains, attracts and motivates professionals in the public service.

Jobs classification is a prerequisite for effective implementation of the salaries system, therefore the salaries system will be based on adequate jobs classification. As part of this objective, measures will be taken to complete the classification of jobs in all institutions by defining classes for each category, designations and positions for each class, as well as introducing general description for each category and class.

An adequate legal framework for salaries in the public sector is a cornerstone for implementation of a fair, transparent and equal salary system. After the adoption of LSPS, the legal framework related to the salary system will be completed by drafting and approving the relevant regulations for the implementation of the new salary system in the public sector.

The implementation of reforms in the salary system requires building staff capacities. For this purpose, practical guides will be prepared, as well as professional training will be conducted for the staff responsible for implementation of the salary system.

Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the reform of the salary system will be one of the measures that will be continuously undertaken by the responsible institutions such as the

⁹⁴ December 2021

⁹⁵ The base value is calculated as the average number of upheld appeals related to challenging a vacancy, as obtained by IOCCSK data for the last 5 years 2017-2021. This was done in agreement with the representatives of IOCCSK for two reasons: (1) in the last two years (2020-2021) there were very few recruitments in the CS due to obstacles in the implementation of the LPO and (2) in this period, the IOCCSK was not fully functional due to absence of IOCCSK members.

Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Finance. To increase the transparency and provide more information on salaries in the public sector, regular annual reports will be published that will contain data on salaries for all employees in the public sector, broken down by category and position.

The results achieved through this specific objective will enable proper functioning of the salary system which retains, attracts and motivates the staff as well as contributes to professional public service.

Indicator	Base 2021	Target 2027
The extent to which the legal framework and public service salaries system support the fair and transparent payment and remuneration of civil servants <i>Source: SIGMA</i>	1	4
Data on salaries in the public service are published, easily accessible and broken down into categories, classes and positions <i>Source: MIA and MFPT</i>	0	3

7.3.1. 4 Specific Objective 4: The system of professional development of civil servants has been improved and operational

This objective aims to create and implement a practical system for assessing training needs, training and professional development and evaluating the performance of public officials in order to increase the efficiency, sustainability and professionalism of the public service.

Although the legislation defines the mechanisms responsible for professional development, it is necessary to analyze and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the current system and its impact in order to propose changes that should be made to the professional development system. Therefore, a detailed analysis of the current public service capacity development system will be made in order to analyze existing professional development policies, financing of professional development, the quality of training programs, the structural, financial and human capacities of the mechanisms responsible for professional development in public service. This measure will enable drafting proposals and recommendations for improving professional development system of public officials. Based on the findings and recommendations of this analysis, measures will be taken to improve the regulatory framework for professional development, improve the structural, financial and human capacities of KIPA and DMPO, improve the training needs assessment process and improve training methods and techniques.

In addition, the findings and recommendations of this analysis will allow to determine the strategic vision for professional development in public service through the preparation of a long-term plan for capacity development of public officials. This long-term and comprehensive plan will determine the strategic orientation based on the vision and strategic objectives, as contained in the main strategic framework (NDP, PARS, etc.) as well as on systematically identified needs at the institution level and at the individual level.

The normative framework that regulates professional development in public service should be further developed and improved. Therefore, measures will be taken to draft regulations that determine the development, organization and financing of mandatory trainings, set out in LPO.

Methodology for assessing the impact of training programmes will be updated.

Improving the system of planning objectives and evaluating work results will be another measure. This will be done by preparing a manual for planning annual objectives of public officials and their alignment with annual institutional objectives. To increase the effectiveness of the implementation of the regulation for evaluation of work results and the manual for planning annual objectives, training programs will be prepared and delivered targeting managerial level staff in regard to planning of annual objectives and their alignment to institutional objectives.

The results achieved through this specific objective will improve and promote the current professional development system, which will have developed all the necessary capacities to ensure continuous development of knowledge, skills and attitudes of public officials and will contribute to professional public service in Kosovo.

Indicator	Base 2021	Target 2027
% of civil servants who participated in at least one training program annually <i>Source: KIPA</i>	25%	40%
% of civil servants who participated in mandatory training <i>Source: KIPA</i>	0%	100%

7.4 Accountability and Transparency

7.4.1 General Objective 4: Increase the level of accountability and transparency in public administration.

The area of accountability and transparency of public administration is relevant because it is related to rational organization of public administration with clear lines of accountability and transparency for the public, to the largest possible extent. Addressing this area enables a clear division of responsibilities between ministries and agencies and a clear typology of bodies/agencies within the state administration. The corresponding typology is planned to be achieved through the process of streamlining agencies. The performance management system for bodies/agencies within the Government will be improved in practice through the implementation of performance management mechanisms as defined by LOFSAIA. This element is also important as it enables setting of objectives from the Government to the ministries and from the latter to the agencies. The implementation of measures under this field will enable greater accountability of public institutions

towards citizens as a precursor to good administration directed towards citizens. Public institutions will provide full access to public documents to citizens, and will also publish relevant information on mandate, functions, budget, expenditures, plans and annual performance reports to the public. Similarly, exercise of citizens' right to a good administration directed towards the citizens will be improved through better implementation of the recommendations issued by the Ombudsperson.

The area of accountability in this strategy is related to the NDS 2030 development goal "Effective and accountable government" listed under the Good Governance pillar. More specifically, the area of accountability in this strategy is directly related to the second objective "Increase the effectiveness of public service and accountability in public administration". In fact, this strategic objective of NDP includes two principles of public administration, public service and human resource management and accountability in public administration. Both principles are addressed separately in this strategy. The implementation of the objectives and measures in this area will contribute to the increase of the accountability of the public administration determined by NDP 2030. This is because there will be increased accountability of the public administration by streamlining the organization of the state administration, clear lines of accountability between the bodies of the state administration and the state administration itself towards the public. Similarly, increased access to public documents by citizens and businesses and the proactive publication of information through the websites of public institutions will increase the level of accountability of the public administration.

Objectives and measures on implementation of the performance management system, streamlining of agencies, reorganization of inspection bodies, increased publication of information and better implementation of recommendations of Ombudsperson institution will contribute to the achievement of the NDP objective "Increase the effectiveness of the public service and accountability in the public administration" and therefore its own development goal "Effective and accountable government".

Indicator	Base	Target 2027
Accountability in public administration Source: SIGMA	2021 (Avg: 2.4 out of 5)	3.5/5
Open government (transparent) Source: World Justice Project	2021 (0.55 on a scale of 0 to 1)	0.75

7.4.1. 1 Specific objective 1: Improve the organization of the state administration with clear lines of accountability within and between institutions

The state administration will be organized according to the legal framework on organization and operation of the state administration. The legal framework is in place; however, implementation is still lacking. This objective will be achieved through the develop and adoption of regulations on internal organization of ministries and agencies and by delineating responsibilities between them.

Also, this objective aims to introduce performance management system, which will be achieved by drafting of annual performance plans built around the objectives and targets agreed between the ministries and agencies. As a result, agencies will report to parent ministries through annual performance reports against the achievement of pre-defined objectives and targets through performance plans.

A clear typology of agencies (bodies within the state administration) will be achieved in practice by streamlining agencies. For this purpose, the Action Plan for streamlining agencies will be updated, the methodology for streamlining agencies will be prepared and a management and coordinating body for the streamlining process will be established. Similarly, a special emphasis will be given to reform of inspections by aligning inspection procedure and by defining inspection responsibilities between the central and local levels. This will be achieved by aligning laws and by-laws that include inspections with the Law on Inspections, recently approved by the Assembly.

Indicator	Base	Target 2027
% of ministries, agencies within the state administration that approved regulations on internal organization, aligned with LOFSAIA <i>Source: OPM and MIA</i>	5 % (2021)	95 %
% of agencies in the state administration that are implementing the performance management system in line with LOFSAIA <i>Source: MIA</i>	0 (2021)	95 %
% of independent (non-constitutional) agencies and executive agencies that have been streamlined through laws approved in the Assembly <i>Source: Assembly and MIA</i>	7 % (2022)	30 %

7.4.1. 2 Specific objective 2: Increase access to public documents by citizens and businesses at the central and local level

This objective aims to increase the level of access to public documents as guaranteed by the Constitution and the Law on access to public documents. This objective will be achieved by strengthening the role and powers of the Information and Privacy Agency *vis-à-vis* public institutions in order to increase the level of access to public documents at the central and local level. Taking into account the recent recommendations on the full effectiveness of the agency, an *ex-post* evaluation of the Law on access to public documents will be made in order to establish whether the agency has the necessary powers to perform its function. In this way, access to public information by citizens at the central and local level will increase, which will also be monitored by the Information and Privacy Agency. In accordance with the law, each public institution will report on an annual basis to the agency on the rate of access to public documents during the respective year. Similarly, the number of public institutions that report to the agency will increase as conferences and tables will be organized to raise awareness and relevance of access to public

documents, as well as increase the number of institutions reporting to the relevant agency on the matter.

This objective aims to increase the transparency of institutions in two respects: through publication of catalogues of information from the institutions on their official pages and through the publication of datasets on the open data portal. Also, in order to achieve a clear, complete and independent overview on the implementation of access to public documents, an electronic and independent mechanism will be created, which will record requests and responses for access to public documents. This mechanism will be based with the Information and Privacy Agency, which will also monitor this process.

Indicator	Base	Target 2027
% of requests for access to public documents to public institutions at the central and local level that received positive responses within the prescribed legal deadline <i>Source: Information and Privacy Agency</i>	92 % (2021)	95 %
% of public institutions that have reported to the Information and Privacy Agency (IPA) on an annual basis <i>Source: Information and Privacy Agency</i>	64 % (2021)	95 %
% of public institutions at the central level that have published information catalogues through official websites <i>Source: Information and Privacy Agency</i>	0 % (2021)	90 %

7.4.1. 3 Specific objective 3: Increase the rate of implementation of recommendations of independent institutions by institutions at the central and local level

This objective aims to strengthen the role of independent institutions such as the Ombudsperson and the National Audit Office (NAO) *vis-à-vis* the public administration. This will be achieved by organizing events (conferences and tables) with the aim of raising awareness and increasing the implementation rate of recommendations issued by independent institutions. The Government's role in this direction will be to organize annual conferences/round-tables together with the Assembly, independent institutions, ministries and other agencies to discuss the rate of implementation of the recommendations.

This objective aims to increase the role and effectiveness of two independent institutions against the state administration through planned activities planned under an action plan. The implementation of the recommendations of Ombudsperson in 2021 is at 27% and below the

regional average (39%). On the other hand, the implementation of recommendations of NAO is higher in 2020 compared to previous years, but again falling below the regional average (55%).

Indicator	Base	Target 2027
% of the Ombudsperson's recommendations that have been implemented by institutions at the central and local level Source: Ombudsperson	27 % (2021)	55 %
% of recommendations of the Auditor General that have been implemented by institutions at the central and local level Source: NAO	40 % (2020)	60 %

8. MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION OF PAR

8.1 Management and Coordination Structures of PAR

8.1.1 Current status

The structures of management, coordination and monitoring in relation to strategic documents of PAR, have been determined by Government Decision of April 2021⁹⁶.

The Council of Ministers for PAR (CMRAP) is a political level authority composed of relevant ministers and chaired by the Minister of Internal Affairs⁹⁷. Its main responsibilities include, *inter alia*, overseeing the implementation of PAR strategies, reviewing progress reports, undertaking corrective measures, supporting the Government and the Assembly on streamlining agencies and introducing accountability lines, monitoring and supporting progress in the Sectoral Reform Contract, proposals for changes to PAR strategies and similar. CMRAP meets on a quarterly basis and other institutions and organizations can be invited to the meeting by the Chairman of CMRAP. The meetings are held once a year, usually before the PAR Special Group meetings, and monitoring reports are reviewed and approved at these meetings; however, these meetings are not used for substantive discussions on the challenges associated with implementation of reforms.

The decision also specifies the institutional responsibilities for the implementation of the strategic documents of PAR. According to this decision, OPM is responsible for managing and coordinating

⁹⁶ Decision on the organization and operation of the Council of Ministers for PAR and the structures responsible for coordination, monitoring and implementation of strategic documents of PAR, no. 04/09 dated 21.04.2021..

⁹⁷ Minister of Finance, Labor and Transfers, Minister of Local Administration, Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade, Minister of Justice, Prime Minister's Office - political advisor

the implementation of SBR 2017-2021 and SIPPC 2017-2021, MFLT manages SRPFM 2016-2020 and MIA manages and coordinates the implementation of SMPA 2015-2020. The General Secretaries of these institutions were designated as coordinators and have been asked to create and chair relevant working groups to review progress and address challenges with implementation. The responsibilities of coordinators include executing the decisions of the Ministerial Council on PAR, reviewing implementation performance, reviewing challenges, obstacles and suggesting corrective measures, prioritizing and funding issues related to implementation as well as preparing the annual progress report by including recommendations for improvement. This coordination structure has not been functional.

The main structure responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of PAR strategies is the Department of PAR (DPAR) within the MIA. In addition to DPAR's role as the coordinating secretariat for CMRAP, its main responsibilities also include monitoring and verifying the results achieved (including data collection and analysis) and regular preparation of the consolidated report on all PAR strategies.

8.1.2 Management and Coordination of PARS 2022-2027

The Management and Coordination of the PAR Strategy must clearly identify the leadership that ensures, facilitates and monitors the implementation and development of management and coordination structures at the political and administrative levels in order to direct the process, with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and capacities⁹⁸.

The distribution of institutional responsibilities for thematic areas of PAR based on the current legislation is presented below⁹⁹:

Figure 6: Institutional responsibilities for the management and coordination of PARS

PARS 2022-2027	Thematic field	Responsible institutions / organizational units
	Policy planning and coordination	Office of the Prime Minister/ Strategic Planning Office
	Service delivery	Ministry of Internal Affairs/ Department for PAR
	Public service and human resource management	
	Accountability and Transparency	

A three-tier coordination structure will be established to direct and coordinate the implementation of PARS:

⁹⁸ The main requirements from the Public Administration Reform Principles for candidate countries and potential candidates for EU membership regarding the management and coordination mechanism of PAR

⁹⁹ The current overview of institutional responsibilities is based on Regulation No. 02/2021 for the areas of administrative responsibility of the Prime Minister's Office and ministries. However, the Program for Prevention and Reduction of Administrative Burden 2022-2027 was developed by the Office of Strategic Planning of the Office of the Prime Minister and after its approval by the Government, the responsibility for its management and coordination remained in the Office of the Prime Minister, respectively in the Office for Strategic Planning.

1. Political level structure: The Council of Ministers for Public Administration Reform (CMPAR), is the main responsible structure at the political level for PAR. The composition of CMRPA remains the same as determined by the previous Government Decision¹⁰⁰. CMRPA will normally meet every six months, its sessions will be open to civil society, academia, media, donors to PAR as well as other interested observers. Its main responsibilities include, among others:

- 1.1 strategic direction and supervision of the reform process, taking or proposing corrective measures for effective implementation, reviewing regular annual or extraordinary monitoring and evaluation including the achievement of objectives, budget execution or financial gaps;
- 1.2 discusses and guides the direction of PAR policies including the review of policy proposals that require government approval (i.e. reform draft law, regulations, concept papers, etc.);
- 1.3 support to Government and the Assembly on streamlining agencies and introduction of the line of accountability as well as monitoring of and support to progress in the PAR Sectoral Contract;
- 1.4 acting as a mechanism for resolving disputes before consideration by the Government;
- 1.5 facilitating coordination of PAR donors and the engagement of civil society organizations;
- 1.6 directing communication on PAR both within the administration and with the public.

2. Structure at the administrative level consists of two coordinating groups (interministerial):

- 2.1 Coordinating Group on Policy Planning and Coordination and Service Delivery (chaired by the senior public official responsible for PAR in OPM);
- 2.2 Coordinating Group for Public Service and Human Resource Management and Accountability and Transparency (chaired by the senior public official responsible for PAR in MIA).

3. Composition of the coordinating groups will mean the representation of institutions in the CMRPA, extended by ministries and other relevant agencies. Working groups will meet on a quarterly basis. Its meetings will be open to civil society, academia, media, PAR donors and other interested observers. Its main responsibilities include, among others:

- 3.1 ensuring execution of decisions and conclusions of CMRPA;

¹⁰⁰ No. 04/09 of 21.04.2021

- 3.2 supervising and discussing the progress of the implementation of the reform, based on the information and reports of regular or extraordinary monitoring, recommending improvements for review by CMRPA, coordinating and supporting the institutions responsible for the implementation of the reform;
- 3.3 facilitating the effective work of CMRPA through the preparation of materials for discussion and communication, as well as proposals for improvements in the implementation of the reform;
- 3.4 discussion of PARS improvements and formulation of proposals including policy proposals requiring review of CMRPA and preparation of positions;
- 3.5 discussing and offering solutions to determine priorities and the budget;
- 3.6 coordination with PAR donors and civil society organizations on their contribution to PAR.
- 3.7 To report regularly after each meeting to the general secretaries (OPM and MIA).

4. Secretariat - The Department for PAR (DPAR) of the MIA will serve as the secretariat for both the CMRPA and the inter-ministerial working groups. Their main responsibilities include among others:

- 4.1 leading and coordinating preparations for the meetings of CMRPA and inter-ministerial working groups by drafting the agenda, preparation and distribution of materials, distribution of invitations, drafting and distribution of minutes and decisions;
- 4.2 preparation and coordination of regular and extraordinary monitoring reports;
- 4.3 administration of the PAR electronic monitoring platform, ensuring proper data collection, performing data analysis and supporting institutions in using the electronic platform;
- 4.4 forwarding the decisions and conclusions of CMRPA and inter-ministerial working groups;
- 4.5 close coordination with the SPO in OPM on issues related to the priority areas of policy planning, coordination and service delivery as well as coordination with other relevant institutions;
- 4.6 maintaining contacts, continuing the exchange of information with donors for PAR to reorganize their support for the reform;
- 4.7 coordination and facilitation of communication activities and visibility of PAR.

8.2 Communication of PAR

8.2.1 Current Status

Although major reform interventions have been made to the legal system of Kosovo, such as in the civil and public service, the organization of the administration, the simplification of administrative procedures for the provision of public services or the reduction of the administrative burden, the public is only sporadically and partially informed about the initiatives, goals and results of these reforms. This undermines the efforts made by the Kosovo and EU authorities on effective and responsible administration, but also misses opportunities to expand cooperation on changes and improvements with citizens, civil society, business or the donor community. Therefore, a wellorganized, strategic and regular communication about PAR initiatives and its progress is required in order to inform, educate and gain public support for continuing and making reforms. The most obvious challenges related to the understanding of PAR and its visibility refer to:

- The public is not sufficiently aware of what the Public Administration Reform entails and what exactly it includes;
- The terminology that is usually used in public administration actions is not easily understandable when communicated to the public;
- The benefits of PAR objectives are presented to the public in a vague and inaccurate manner;
- Although EU support to the process of PAR in Kosovo has proven to be the most influential incentive for ongoing reforms, the visibility of such assistance is not publicly known; and
- Lack of clarity in terms of institutional responsibility and standards for communication on PAR, poor and insufficient sources of information and lack of any promotional activity regarding PAR.

8.2.2 PAR Promotion Plan

To overcome this situation, systematic and complementary measures will be taken towards specific results:

- 1.** Strengthening organizational, individual and coordinating capacities for communication of PAR, which includes improvements in the organizational structures responsible for communication of PAR in MIA, the introduction of inter-institutional forums for coordinating the promotion and visibility of PAR, the exchange of experience between practitioners and increasing the communication skills and competencies of civil servants.
- 2.** Creating functional information resources for effective communication of PAR by setting up the PAR website, ensuring the presence of PAR in social networks, developing communication standards including defining key messages, target groups, guidelines of communication and promotion as well as the development of promotional materials.

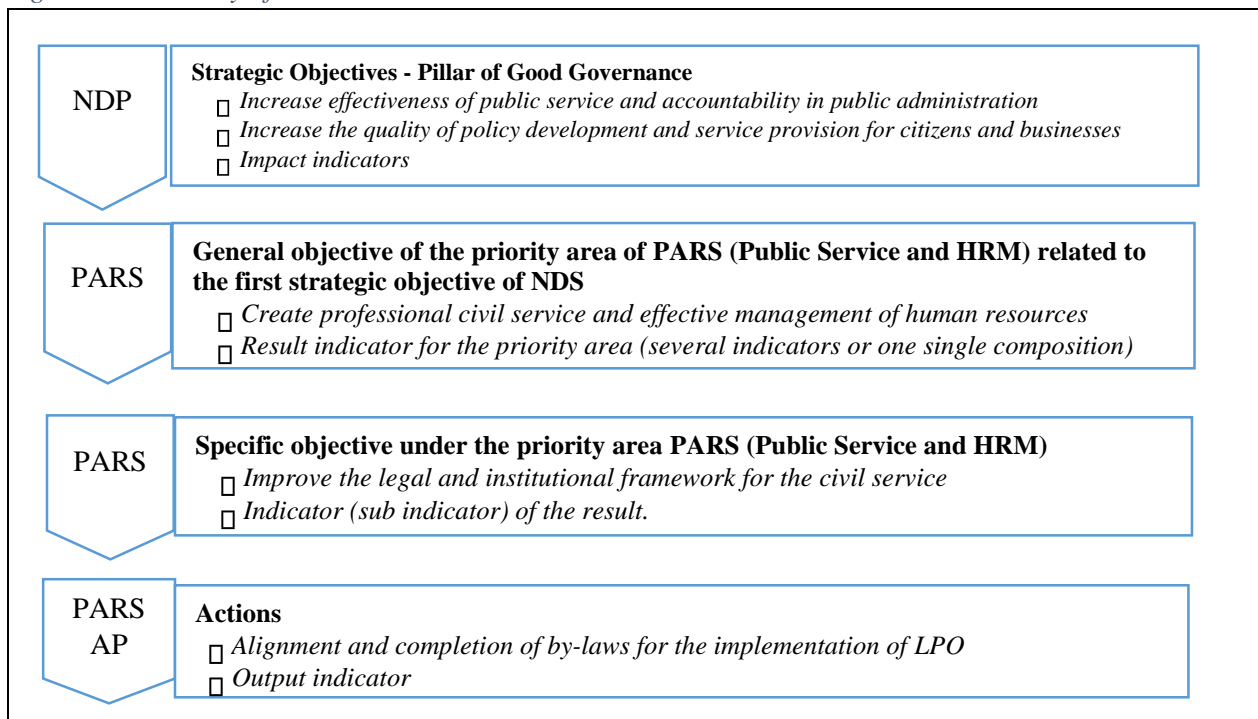
3. Communication and promotion of the PARS 2022-2027 and its actions, such as supporting public surveys on satisfaction with the service delivery, informing the public about their right and opportunities to participate in policy development, re-designing services, informing the public about the prevention of political influence in recruitment, measures for the prevention of corruption, etc.

9. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

9.1 Monitoring framework

PARS 2022-2027 is designed in accordance with the concept of the strategic management framework, which provides for the connection and setting of objectives and indicators from top to bottom. The PARS and its Action Plan include performance indicators and sub-indicators at the output level to measure reform progress and results. Indicators are explained and described in the so-called "passport of indicators" which is an annex to this strategy. The hierarchy of objectives and indicators from NDS to PARS is presented as follows:

Figure 7: Hierarchy of NDP – PARS indicators



General objectives of the PARS priority areas are accompanied by a single composite indicator or at least two quantitative/qualitative results indicators and mainly SIGMA Monitoring Framework indicators are used for this purpose.

Specific objectives within the priority areas of PARS are further described with more tailored and localized sub-indicators and baselines and target values.

The PARS Action Plan 2022 - 2027 for the first two years identifies actions, result indicators, institutions responsible for implementation, financial costs and implementation timeline, etc. The PARS implementation plan will be reviewed and updated on a biennial basis.

9.2 Institutional framework for monitoring and reporting

Practice of monitoring and reporting of four strategic documents of PAR, during the last 5 years, shows that the reorganization of these processes is possible even when different institutions are given such responsibilities. Since 2020, DRPA has consolidated and prepared a single monitoring report from the 4 separate strategies. For this purpose, DRPA has developed the digital monitoring platform, where the institutions responsible for the implementation of concrete measures can give their contributions for specific actions and ensure that the data required for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan of PARS is submitted in real time. Recognizing the experience, human and technical capacities that have already been developed, the DRPA remains responsible for ensuring a functional monitoring and reporting system for the implementation of PARS and to support other institutions in its use. This in particular applies to the institutions responsible for the implementation of relevant actions (e.g. NDP) but also to the management and coordination structures of the PAR at the administrative and political level.

In general, the responsibility of DRPA includes data collection, administration and management of monitoring tools, data analysis, reporting, donor coordination and communication support of PAR. Data collection, including provision of evidence on progress will be done through PAR's digital monitoring platform on a quarterly basis. Based on the collected and verified data, DPAR will prepare the PAR monitoring report twice a year. This report shall include in particular: □ analytical summary on progress towards expected results and policy objectives against targets;

- recommendations for corrective and improvement measures that require attention and consideration by decision makers;
- summary of actions implemented and results provided; □ main activities for the next reporting period.

The PAR monitoring report will be reviewed and improved by administrative level structures for Management and Coordination of PAR and will then be submitted for discussion and approval by CMRPA.

DPAR is also responsible for facilitating and supporting all promotional and visibility activities related to PAR, CMRPA and other stakeholders.

9.3 Evaluation

The interim evaluation of the implementation of PARS will be organized and carried out before the development of the new plan and will serve as a basis for development of new action plan. Its main purpose is to provide lessons from implementation that should enhance and guide further reforms (ex post), but also to design and consider more options for its sustainable continuation (ex ante).

10. FINANCIAL IMPACT AND FUNDING SOURCES OF THE STRATEGY

Determination of the assessment of financial impact of the Strategy Action Plan was carried out through the process of assessing the necessary potential cost and the budget projections for the implementation of the activities by each institution which has the main responsibility in the realization of the activities envisaged, as well as the support from donors.

In total, the estimated necessary funds for the implementation of PARS 2022-2027 actions for 2022-2024 are estimated at over **10 million Euro**.

One of the reforms that is expected to have the greatest impact on the implementation of the Strategy will be the reform to drafting and approval of regulations for the internal organization of both ministries and regulatory and executive agencies, which is estimated at over 3 million Euro. On the other hand, the preparation of the long-term plan for training of civil servants based on the assessment of training needs, as well as the improved infrastructural capacity (halls and equipment) to enable electronic written testing of candidates is estimated at approximately 2 million Euro.

The effect of these reform measures is estimated at 5 million Euro.

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1: Action Plan

11.2 Appendix 2: Passport of indicators

11.3 Appendix 3: Matrix of Risk Management

11.4 Appendix 4: Promotion Plan of PARS