

A grayscale background image showing a hand holding a pen, poised to write on a document. The document has some faint, illegible text. A large, thick orange arc curves across the right side of the image.

the grey book of public services





the grey book of **public** services

Belgrade, 2018

Name of Publication:

The Gray Book of Public Services

Published by:

European Movement in Serbia

Authors:

Katarina Tadić i Milena Lazarević

Circulation:

500

Place and date of issue:

Belgrade, 2018

ISBN 978-86-80046-54-9



This publication is made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of this publication are the responsibility of the European Movement in Serbia and the European Policy Centre and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

Acknowledgement

On behalf of the European Movement in Serbia (EMinS) and the European Policy Centre (CEP), we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to development of the Grey Book of Public Services. First of all, we owe gratitude to our local partners – EMinS Subotica, EMinS Novi Sad, EMinS Sremska Mitrovica, EMinS Lazarevac, EMinS Valjevo, EMinS Kraljevo, EMinS Kruševac, EMinS Novi Pazar, EMinS Leskovac, Protecta from Niš and Timok Youth Centre (Timočki omladinski centar) from Zaječar, for their commitment and great endeavours invested in undertaking the campaign “JA u centru pažnje”, (“ME in the Spotlight”), thus enabling us to collect the stories of citizens’ experience when using public services. Also, we want to thank the Pro Pozitiv agency for conducting opinion polls by ensuring the quality of collected data and analyses. Further on, we wish to thank all our interlocutors from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Interior for the allocated time and useful inputs, which provided us with a better insight into policy making processes. We are equally thankful to our interlocutors and colleagues from civil society organisations and representatives of expert community, who shared with us their observations and findings of the existing research. Finally, may we offer our gratitude to all citizens of Serbia who took part in our project and thus contributed to our joint efforts to improve public service delivery.

Table of Contents

03	Acknowledgement
07	I. Introduction
09	II. The research methodology
10	II.a Structure
11	III. The services of police administrative service
11	III.a Citizens' opinion polls
14	III.b Results of the national campaign
16	III.c The quality of policy making process
18	IV. Primary health care services
18	IV.a Citizens' opinion polls
21	IV.b Results of the national campaign
23	IV.c The quality of policy making process
25	V. Enrolment of children in pre-school institutions and primary schools
25	V.a Citizens' opinion polls
33	V.b Results of the national campaign
35	V.c The quality of policy making process
37	Recommendations
60	Research methodology

I. Introduction

This is **the Grey Book of Public Services in Serbia**, product of the two-year project “Partnership for Public Administration Reform and Public Services in Serbia – PARTnerships”, implemented by the European Movement in Serbia and European Policy Centre from May 2016 till May 2018, on the territory of Serbia, in cooperation with twelve local partners and supported by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The goal of the project is to contribute to citizen-oriented¹ public administration reform through (1) broader participation of civil society organisations in monitoring the progress of public administration reform, as well as in developing quality proposals for improving evidence-based policies; (2) establishment of two-way communication between citizens and relevant authorities; (3) ensuring reliable information on citizens’ satisfaction with most frequently used and most widespread services from three different areas, as well as on the quality of policy making; (4) providing recommendations for improvement of public services and public administration system. **The goal of the Grey Book is to present the most important results of conducted research and to offer a specific set of recommendations for improvement of public service delivery.**

Public administration reform constitutes not only one of the key pillars of the European integration process, but also a comprehensive process, which is supposed to improve the overall system of public administration in Serbia and the quality of services delivered to citizens by public administration. Citizens are the main users and main funders of public services, but at the same time quite often dissatisfied. In order to explore the citizens’ views and causes of their (dis)satisfaction with public services, the first part of the survey was focused on three large groups of public services: issuing personal documents (identity card, passport and driving licence), services provided by primary health care centres, as well as those at children’s enrolment in pre-school institutions and primary schools. These groups of services were selected as most frequently used public services that almost all citizens get in touch with at some point of their lives. The research results served as guidance for specific recommendations, aiming at contribution to resolving most frequent problems that citizens are faced with, as well as at improving the overall system of public service delivery.

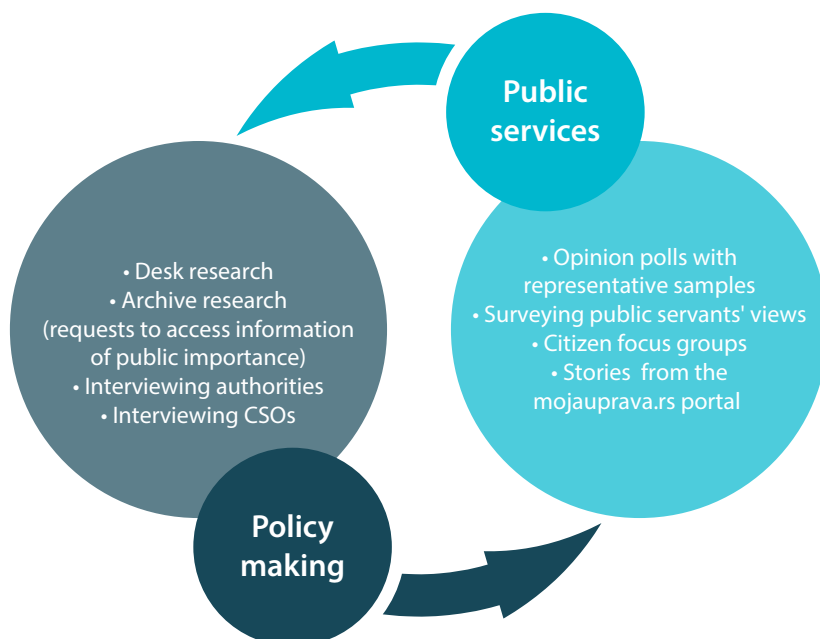
The second part of the research implemented within the project was focused on policy system management, as one of the key areas within public administration reform in Serbia, along with the public service delivery system. Public administration is perceived today as citizens’ service, geared towards efficient service delivery with respect for principle of equal service accessibility to all citizens. Among the key prerequisites for such public administration is a participatory and evidence-based policy making process, which not only contributes to enhancing transparency and accountability, but also makes a positive impact on policies’ outcomes, i.e. improvement of public service quality.

The project itself comprises several components, including: 1) qualitative research of policy making in relevant ministries (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, and Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development); 2) quantitative and qualitative survey of

¹ Terms in this study used in masculine gender imply the biological gender (sex) of persons they refer to.



citizens' views of satisfaction with public services in the areas of health care, interior affairs and education (pre-school and primary), on order to provide solid evidence of citizens' satisfaction with three different groups of most frequently used and most wide-spread public services; and 3) campaign undertaken across Serbia in order to promote the concept of citizen-oriented public administration, as well as for PAR to involving citizens and CSO representatives, but also to collect citizens' experiences with public service use, which served for defining recommendations. These research results served as a basis for further analysis of the insufficiently explored process of policy making and citizens' satisfaction with public services in Serbia.



II. The research methodology

In order to get a complete picture of quality and efficiency of public services surveyed, several research approaches and techniques were employed in order to cover both the entry side, i.e. the process of policy making that regulates the system of these services' delivery, and the exit side, i.e. citizens' (dis)satisfaction with the services provided in these areas.

By combining the field and desk research, the qualitative research of policy making process aimed at establishing the extent to which policies in the selected areas are evidence-based, to what extent interministerial consultations are held and to what extent the process is open and enabling for the participation of citizens and civil society. The primary data were collected primarily through semi-structured interviews with representatives of ministries, but also of relevant civil society organisations. Field research was followed by archive research, including the study of relevant literature and insight into archives related to the processes of developing relevant policy documents in the selected areas.²

Quantitative approach was applied in opinion polls, in order to find out citizens' attitudes regarding the level of citizens' (dis)satisfaction with public services in the target areas. The survey was conducted on a random and representative sample (1,200 respondents each) from all across Serbia (without Kosovo).³ In order to mitigate quantitative methodological limitations, two focus groups were organised per each public service area with citizens in Belgrade and in Nis.⁴ This enabled a combination of quantitative and qualitative survey methods and the advantages of both approaches were utilised.

Opinion polls encompasses several various aspects of citizens' "encounters" with three groups of public services, i.e. direct contact between citizens and institutions, but also the general assessment of user-friendliness, technical and human capacities, the issue of quality and service accessibility. The analysis of the poll's results was focused on five relevant areas: efficiency and service quality, citizens' satisfaction and expectations, abuse practice, discriminatory practice and citizens' information.

Also, in order to get as objective a picture of service delivery, the polls envisaged the public servants' views of citizens' satisfaction with services delivered. However, the survey of public servants' attitudes was conducted successfully only in the area of primary health care and children's enrolment in pre-school institutions and primary schools.⁵ Despite the

² Field research with representatives of institutions was conducted in the period January-April 2017, while representatives of CSOs and professional public were conducted during October, November and December of the same year; in order to complement the findings. Desk research was steadily conducted from September 2016 to December 2017, in order to provide the relevance of data and recommendations.

³ Opinion polls on primary health care was conducted in the period 6-29 December 2016. The opinion polls on services delivered by the police administrative service were conducted between 9 February and 3 March 2017, while the polls on citizens' views of enrolment procedures at pre-school institutions and primary schools was realised between 29 May and 17 July the same year.

⁴ In Belgrade two focus groups were organised on 25 February and one on 16 March 2017. In Nis three focus groups were questioned on 11 March 2017.

⁵ The opinion polls of health care professionals were conducted 1-3 February 2017, and attitudes of pre-school and primary school professionals were explored 21-23 June 2017.



numerous efforts, the research team did not manage to obtain access to the police administrative public servants.

Besides the opinion polls, citizens' stories and specific experiences of using public services in the given areas were also collected, as part of the national campaign "JA u centru pažnje" ("ME in the Spotlight"). The campaign was conducted within one-year period, including street actions taken in seventeen towns and municipalities of Serbia, as well as continued story collection via the mojauprava.rs portal. The stories collected depict the most frequent challenges that citizens are faced with then using the above services, but also the way citizens assess the novelties in these areas.

II.a Structure

The Grey Book of Public Services consists of five chapters. The first chapter offers the context of the research process and provides a methodological framework. The subsequent chapters present an overview of the research results in the area of service delivery by the police administrative service, primary health care services and those of children's enrolment in pre-school institutions and primary schools. All the three chapters mentioned comprise sub-chapters, with individually analysed results of all conducted surveys: citizens' poll, collected citizens' stories and research of policy making processes. Furthermore, identified problems are presented for every area, along with recommendations on their solving, with relevant institution and deadline for implementation. The last, fifth chapter offers an overview of most important conclusions from the overall research and recommendations for follow-up.

III. The services of police administrative service

The services delivered by the police administrative service, covered by this survey, include issuance of identity cards, passports and driving licences, which is entirely under the competences of the Ministry of the Interior (MoI). Provision of these services is regulated by a set of laws: The Law on Police, the Law on Identity Card, the Law on Travel Documents and the Law on Road Traffic Safety, the latter regulating driving licence issuance.

Compared to the other two areas that are subject of the research, the police administrative service has undergone the major novelties in e-service introduction. Namely, for issuance of IDs and passports, it is possible to make an appointment via www.euprava.gov.rs portal, for application submission. However, citizens still need to come to the police administrative service at least twice, first to apply and second to receive their IDs or passports or driving licences. Also, the main part of the process of replacing old driving licences with the new, “card” ones, was conducted in the first half of 2017, during our survey, which attaches even more topicality to our analysis. However, at the same time, this information should be kept in mind when interpreting results, because driving licence replacement placed additional burden on the police administrative service.

Besides, in the context of e-service introduction, the significant intention is to enable citizens, through the e-service of “Replacement of the old driving licence with the new (‘card’) one”, to apply electronically and then come to the police station only once to receive the driving licence. However, the whole procedure of installing several different softwares turned out to be quite complicated. In other words, the use of this e-service demanded application of certain versions of Internet Explorer solely, then installation of JAVA and several other softwares for data reading from IDs, with further necessary adjustments, due to which problems with attempted use thereof kept occurring. Consequently, most citizens still went to police stations twice in order to get this document issued.

III.a Citizens’ opinion polls

The survey of citizens’ (dis)satisfaction with services delivered by the police administrative service was conducted between 9 February and 3 March 2017. According to the poll results, most citizens (73%) have visited the police administrative service within the past year and most of them used the services of issuing IDs (71%), then travel documents (12%), driving licences (11%) and vehicle registration (10%).

Chart 1: What was the purpose of your last communication with the police administrative service? (%)

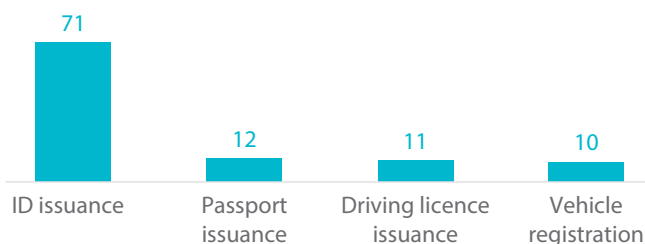
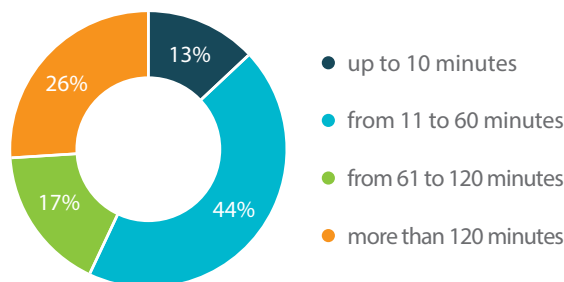




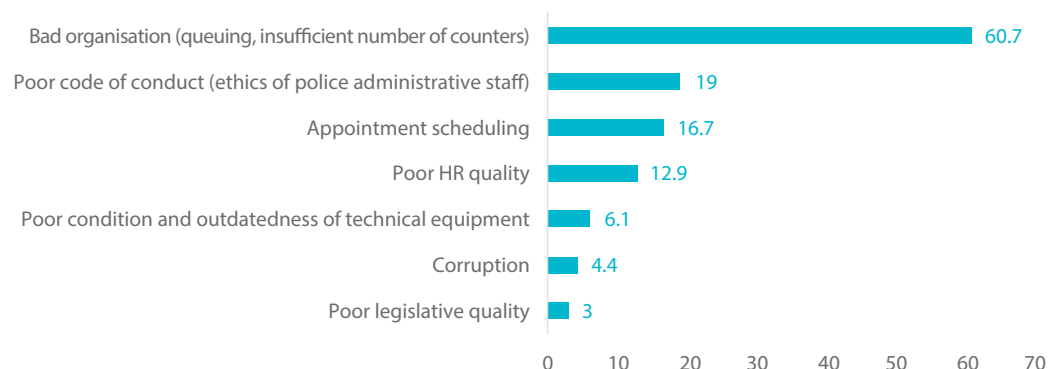
Chart 2: How long did you wait in line/at the counter last time you were at the police administrative service?



More than 70% citizens who have visited the police administrative service came 2-3 times in order to get the same document issued, while more than 40% citizens waited for more than one hour in queues. Yet, there are significant variations amongst the regions in Serbia. Thus, 30% citizens from Vojvodina waited for less than 10 minutes in a line at the police administrative service, whereas every third citizen of Eastern and South-Eastern Serbia waited for more than two hours.

Nevertheless, most citizens are happy with the service quality, despite the said problems. Namely, **more than 60% citizens assessed the services provided by the police administrative service as good quality**. However, **bad organisation**, i.e. waiting and queuing, was recognised as **the major problem** in functioning of the police administrative service (Chart 3). The main aspects of services for citizens are fast service delivery (45%), then the staff attitudes, i.e. their professionalism and kindness (35%).

Chart 3: Major problems in functioning of the police administrative service % (multiple answers)



Regarding the **abuse** at providing services of the police administrative service, 15% citizens recognised corruption as abuse, whereas almost the same number emphasised the need for verbal aggression (higher pitch in communication), as indicated by Chart 4. Although nearly



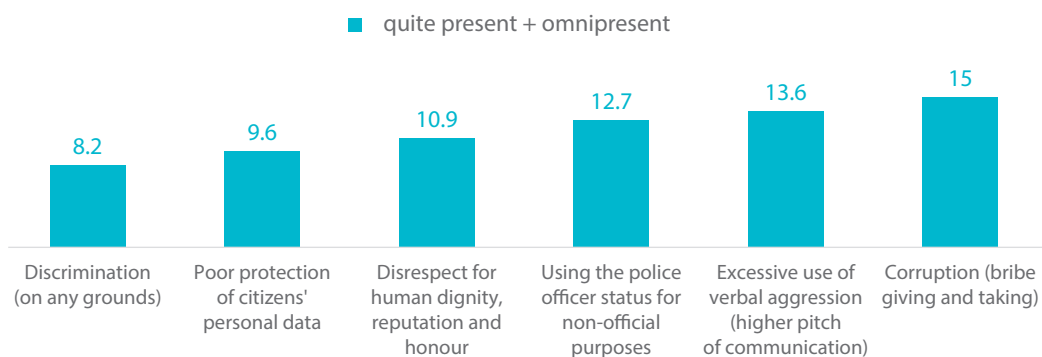
I've heard about web appointments, tried a couple of days in a row, but the system failed, it was impossible. I went there in person, but although there was no queue, the clerk told me that I had to make an appointment via the internet. So, I had to go 18 km farther, to Niška banja, where you can also make an appointment directly.



Experience of a citizen from Niš, submitted to mojauprava.rs



Chart 4: Is there abuse in the work of police administrative service?



90% citizens claim not to have contacted anyone but the staff in the process of document issuance, still almost two thirds (64%) believe that people often use private contacts in practice, to obtain their documents faster, without waiting, i.e. with shortcuts. Every third citizen believes that contacts and informal payments and gifts are necessary for efficient provision of services.

When regards the potential discrimination, citizens' perception is that politicians, as well as relatives and friends of public servants, could easier get the wanted service. On the other hand, there is a lack of awareness of difficulties that persons with disabilities face when obtaining necessary documents, so only every fourth person thinks it harder for these groups to reach the necessary police administrative services. On the other hand, almost half the population (49%) believe it easier for persons with disabilities to be provided with these services.

More than half citizens do not know who to address when deprived of their rights.

Further on, 45% citizens believe they are informed of their rights, and more than half (58%) do not know who to address in case of derogation of rights in contact with the police administrative service, and this figure is even higher among young people (between 18 and 29 years of age). Citizens lacking information of appeals procedures was an issue highlighted by the focus groups too, as one of the main problems in this area.



I was born in Smederevo and I live in Jagodina. In early January 2017, I applied for ID issuance to the MoI Secretariat in Jagodina. The clerk asked me, among other things, to submit a copy of my birth certificate. As I needed my ID urgently, the police administration clerk in Jagodina advised me to request the copy in Smederevo in person. In a telephone conversation, the Civil Registry clerk advised me to go to Smederevo directly. Due to my illness, it got prolonged and it was only after two months that I learned that all could have been done ex officio. Upon my insistence it was done, within a month. I am displeased with the fact that nobody told me, either in Jagodina or in Smederevo, nobody mentioned that the copy could be obtained ex officio.



A citizen of Jagodina, posted on mojauprava.rs





Also, citizens believe that public servants first and foremost, but then media too, should inform them of their rights and of the changes introduced in the police administrative services, whereas only 1.6% citizens believe that is the role of civil society organisations.

III.b Results of the national campaign

Within the “ME in the Spotlight” campaign via the mojauprava.rs portal, 707 citizens’ stories were collected, related to their experience with using public services of the police administrative services. The focus was primarily on the services of issuing IDs, passports and driving licences, but also other services delivered by the police administrative service. Most citizens, 57%, were dissatisfied with the provided services, against the 43% satisfied.

The issuance of IDs, passports and driving licences are the services delivered by the police administrative service, which citizens mainly listed as the reason for their (dis)satisfaction in the past year. Yet, in order to have a more complete picture of the problems that citizens are faced with when using the services of the police administrative service, they were given the opportunity to name other public services they are (dis)satisfied with. Among the collected stories, by the frequency of use, two more service types are conspicuous: change of domicile and vehicle registration. It is precisely the service of vehicle registration that is particularly emphasised as the primary cause of citizens’ dissatisfaction.

Table 1: Citizens’ (dis)satisfaction by type of service

TYPE OF SERVICE		
ID issuance	48%	52%
Passport issuance	49%	51%
Driving licence issuance	46%	54%
Other services	31%	69%

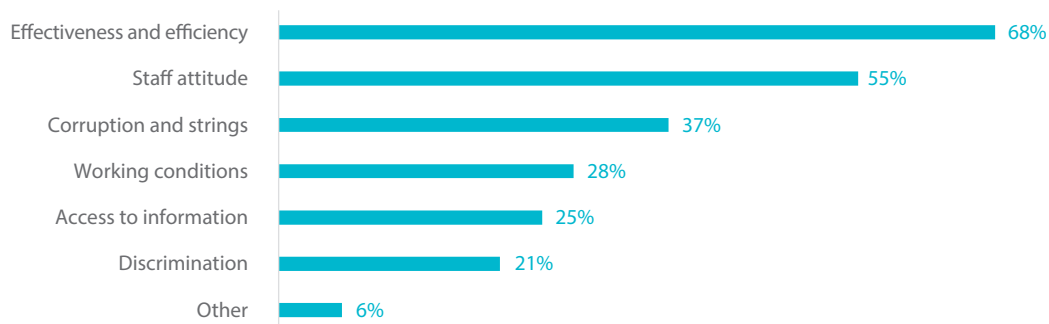
Looking at individual types of services in the focus of our survey and the ratio between citizens’ satisfaction and dissatisfaction, it is apparent that dissatisfaction prevails in all three services’ delivery. Yet, dissatisfaction is most prominent in the category of “other services”.

In the stories where citizens explained the reasons of their dissatisfaction the most prominent ones are the promptness of service delivery and compliance with procedures and work organisation. In other words, the possibility to schedule appointments via the internet, i.e. absence of crowds and queuing are named as citizens’ reasons to be satisfied with services delivered. On the other hand, indicating as a cause of satisfaction the public servants’ attitudes - with citizens’ stories giving primacy to kindness over professionalism - signifies how much importance citizens attach to attentive behaviour of administrative staff. Also, even though there are examples of e-service system malfunctioning, e-services are still marked as a positive development in service delivery, which the competent authorities should bear in mind in the coming period.



When regards dissatisfaction, long queuing and bad organisation of work, in terms of coming to the police administrative service for the same document several times, are the most frequent causes of dissatisfaction. At the same time, the fact that the system for electronic appointment-making does not always work well, more specifically – a few hours of queuing despite the scheduled appointment, makes an additional reason for dissatisfaction with service provided. Also, citizens pointed to unkind and unprofessional treatment by public servants.



Chart 5: Reasons of your dissatisfaction



Yet, in their stories citizens also mention the problem of disregarding procedures, i.e. using personal connections, in order to have an easier and faster access to public services. That indicates an unequal treatment and inequitable access to public services, which makes most citizens dissatisfied.

When the collected citizens' stories are analysed from the point of ratio between satisfaction and dissatisfaction by regions, in Eastern and Southern Serbia there are many more dissatisfied citizens (72%), compared to the rest of Serbia. Interestingly, Vojvodina is the only region where the overall satisfaction prevails over the general dissatisfaction.

Table 2: Citizens' (dis)satisfaction by regions

		
Eastern and Southern Serbia	28%	72%
Belgrade	39%	61%
Vojvodina	52%	48%
Central and Western Serbia	50%	50%

There are no major differences in the satisfaction level between men and women, although women living in Eastern and Southern Serbia are somewhat more satisfied than men. Also, looking into the educational structure, citizens with primary school degree are the only group that is mainly satisfied with service delivery (60%), unlike those with higher education (39%). Then, detailed analysis shows that the youngest citizens, aged 18-29, are the most dissatisfied with services delivered.



III.c The quality of policy making process

In order to assess the process of policy making that regulates service delivery of the police administrative service, simultaneously with citizens' (dis)satisfaction, the following set of laws was analysed: The Law on Police, The Law on Identity Card, the Law on Travel Documents and The Law on Road Traffic Safety, along with the MoI Development Strategy. The focus of this analysis was primarily on transparency and inclusiveness of the process, but also on policies as evidence-based. In other words, the goal was to explore to what extent the regulatory impact assessment is conducted for the laws and what its quality level is, then to what extent the legislative documents are based on the previously conducted analyses and also to what extent stakeholders are enabled to participate, first of all civil society organisations and citizens, and what their influence on proposed drafts is. Thus, the link has been created between citizens' views of the quality of delivered services and the process of policy making.

After a thorough overview of the law making process relevant for our research, progress is visible in policy making at the MoI. In other words, if we are to compare the process of passing the 2005 Law on Identity Card to the 2015 process of amending the Law on Traffic Safety or the 2016 Law on Police, it is noticeable that over time the process has become more analytic, i.e. evidence-based, and it includes certain elements that were missing before. More specifically, the Law on Identity Card was passed in 2005 without a developed rationale and regulatory impact assessment, which were not mandatory under the then Government's Rules of Procedure, whereas ten years later the rationale and regulatory impact assessment became an integral part of the law promulgation procedure.

Also, for the policy making procedure at the MoI and the identified progress, the context of European integration is very important, bearing in mind that this Ministry has been involved with the negotiating process as the leader of the Negotiating Group for Chapter 24, while at the same time police reform is in the focus of this process. Positive impact of the European integration process was visible especially on the example of passing the Law on Police, where the analysis of the state of play was most thoroughly undertaken, compared to other laws, and so was the broad consultative process with close cooperation with civil society organisation and international representatives.

Yet, the analysis results point to numerous shortcomings and leave room for significant improvement. What is visible though is that, although the rationale and regulatory impact assessment are integral part of each drafted legislative proposal, they do not live up to their envisaged role, which is to inform decision makers and offer various problem-solving options for consideration, along with detailed cost and benefit analysis of the options on the table. With insight into these documents, it is evident that the quality of offered analyses is still very low. Thus, when amending the 2015 Law on Road Traffic Safety the regulatory impact assessment was prepared and assessed by the National Public Policy Secretariat (RSJP) as containing partial regulatory impact assessment, underlining that "the proponent formally answered all the questions" and that the "answers to certain questions (...) could have been more insightful". The analysis shows that during the draft law development the usage value of rationale and regulatory impact assessment for quality development of legislative arrangements was not recognised.



When regards the inclusion of civil society organisations and public consultations, they mostly boil down to public debated held in three to four largest cities of Serbia (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš, Kragujevac). However, such cooperation is still viewed more as an one-off event than an ongoing process. Moreover, even when external players get aboard, it normally happens in the end of the process, when the room for intervention is very limited. Also, the composition of working groups for law development is not regulated by law, so representatives of civil sector are not involved most of the times.

From all the above is can be inferred that the MoI decision makers still have not recognised the importance of complete inclusion of all stakeholders into the policy making process. Particularly in the context of endorsing policies regulating service delivery, where direct contact is established between the MoI and citizens, it is necessary to appreciate citizens' experience more and make space and opportunity for their recommendations and suggestions to be heard.

IV. Primary health care services

Delivery of primary health care services is regulated by the Law on Health Care and the Law on Health Insurance. Both laws were subject to qualitative analysis in the context of policy making process under the Ministry of Health (MoH), along with the set of strategies dealing with this area of health care. Also, the research analysis of primary health care and recommendations proposed pertain to the public primary health care centres. Namely, when exploring citizens' attitudes, it was established that a low number of citizens regularly use the services of private health care institutions. Also, unlike the MoI, the survey in this area covered the views of health care professionals too, on the perceived citizens' satisfaction with their services.

It is important to mention that during the citizens' polls on primary health care services the process of replacing old health care booklets with new health insurance cards was in progress. Therefore the mentioned replacement procedure was part of the questionnaire, in order to examine citizens' satisfaction and identify the challenges emerging during the introduction of this novelty.

When regards the announced improvements in this area of service delivery, in late 2017 the issuance of e-prescriptions started in ten Belgrade's municipalities, after which they are planned to be introduced in primary health care centres across Serbia during 2018. E-prescriptions will, most importantly, relieve the chronic patients from coming to receive their prescription once a month or even more often, thus mitigating the pressure on physicians and enabling them to deal with prevention, more than with administrative work and red tape. The announced reform was taken into consideration when developing recommendations for improving service delivery in primary health care centres.

IV.a Citizens' opinion polls

The opinion polls of primary health care services were conducted from 6 to 29 December 2016, whereas the views of health care professionals were explored between 1 and 3 February 2017.

According to the polls results, more than 80% citizens in the past six months used the services of primary health care centres (Chart 6), out of which 95% were in public health care centres. At the same time, 64% citizens had appointments for their last visits to doctors. The average waiting time for examination, if not pre-appointed, was 54 minutes, which is interesting to compare to

the perception of health care professionals who believe that the average waiting period is 36 minutes. Similarly, the results of citizens' polls indicate that in average it takes 17 days to make an appointment, whereas the health care professionals believe it takes 3 days (Chart 7).

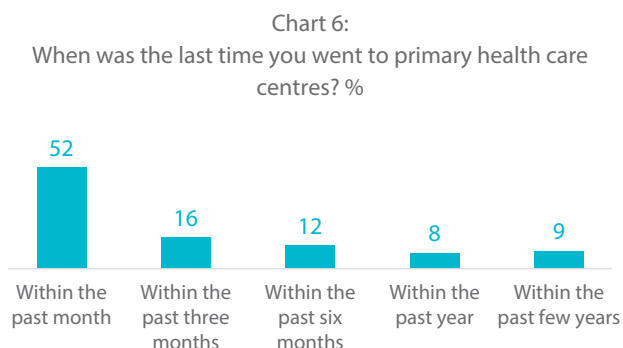
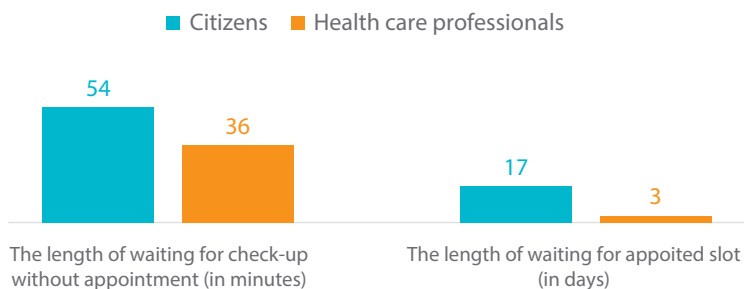




Chart 7: The length of waiting for check-up



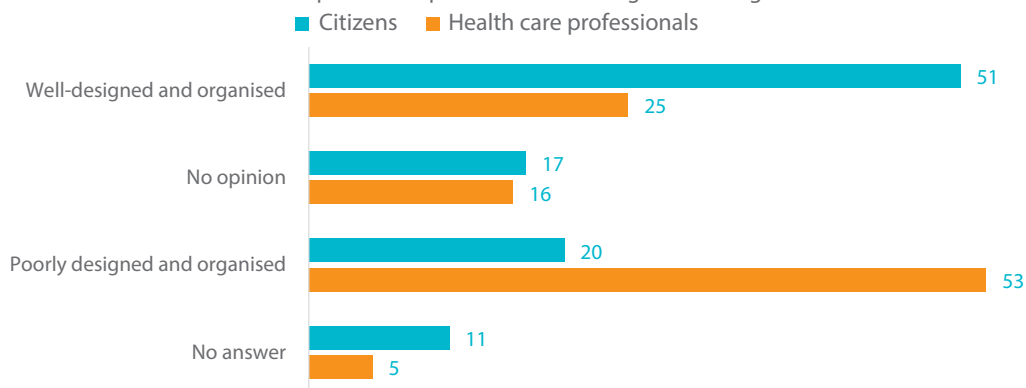
Most citizens are satisfied with the quality of services delivered last time they went to primary health care centres. Still, one third believes that primary health care centres provide low-quality services. The main problems identified in functioning of primary health care centres, as perceived by citizens, are waiting and queuing, with bad system of appointments and insufficiently equipped facilities.

Health care professionals recognise the same problems in functioning of primary health care centres, but from their own point of view, as it were. For health care professionals, the main problem is understaffed institutions, voluminous bureaucracy in medical offices and insufficient equipment. That is to indicate that both citizens and health care professionals, from their own respective standpoints, recognise the lack of capacities in health care institutions and factors that negatively affect the efficiency of service delivery.

The work of selected doctors is mainly assessed as a positive feature in the work of primary health care centres. However, the problem of seeing a doctor in emergency cases and without appointment with ensuing long waiting time, was highlighted in the focus groups.

On the other hand, it is interesting to compare citizens' views and those of health care professionals when it comes to the procedure of replacing the old health care booklets with the new health insurance cards (Chart 8). Namely, the results indicate that the former are quite happier with the replacement and they find advantages in introduction of new cards, unlike the latter (health care professionals).

Chart 8: Is the replacement procedure well-designed and organised? %





Almost every second citizen (42%) thinks it necessary to contact the staff at health care institutions in order to get adequate examination at the primary health care centre. Also, 77% citizens believe that people use private contacts in order to get faster and more efficient services of primary health care, whereas more than half (52%) believe that informal payment and gifts are necessary to be provided with these services.



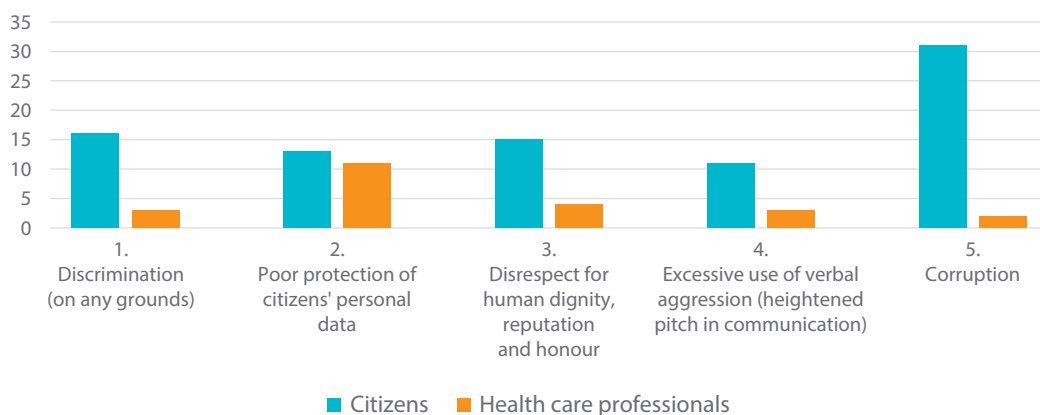
To see your selected GP, it is necessary to check in with your health care booklet at the counter, in the morning before doctors start working. The same counter is used for several doctors at the same time without any order to organisation, so it is always crowded.



A citizen of Jagodina, submitted to mojaoprava.rs

At the same time, corruption is perceived as most widespread abuse in the work of primary health care centres, whereas discrimination is the second. Yet, this is an area where differences between attitudes of citizens and those of health care professionals, as presented by Chart 9.

Chart 9: Abuse practice in health primary health care centres %

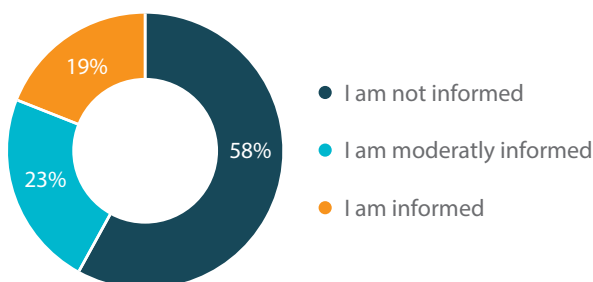


Further on, regarding citizens' perception of potentially discriminated groups in the society, Roma, unemployed and indigent citizens are seen as categories that have more difficulties in getting necessary health care services than average citizens. What is especially striking is the opinion of almost half citizens (46%) that persons with disabilities get the necessary health care services more easily, although the reports of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, as well as those of international organisations, indicate the opposite. The situation is similar with attitudes of health care professionals, who by even larger majority (78%) think that persons with disabilities get primary health care services more easily than average citizens, with only a 5% margin of those who believe it is quite the contrary.

Regarding the citizens' information, the results show that citizens believe that they are either uninformed or minimally informed of their rights and duties in the area of primary health care services (Chart 10). Also, almost more than half citizens do not know who to



Chart 10: Are you informed of patients' rights?



address in case of violation of their patients' rights (49%), and a majority (56%) believe they need a higher level of information. Citizens mainly prefer information via media, and, directly, at primary health care centres, by the staff.

To corroborate the claim on citizens' lack of information, nearly 60% citizens have not heard of the possibility for insured persons to obtain the same service in a private institution when the public health institution is unable to deliver a certain service within 30 days, with costs reimbursed.

IV.b Results of the national campaign

In the period from 20 April 2017 to 15 January 2018, 1106 citizens' stories were collected via the mojauprava.rs portal, on the experiences with using public services in primary health care. The focus was primarily on the services provided by primary health care institutions, but also on other services within the health care system. Most citizens, 67%, were dissatisfied with delivered services, against the 33% satisfied.



Table 3: Services assessed by citizens:

Health care services (examinations, tests, diagnostics, etc.)	63%
Administrative services (transferral of medical records, GP selection, etc.)	26%
Other services	11%

Health care services, such as examination as diagnostics, and administrative services, such as GP selection and transferral of medical records, citizens mainly named as the reason for (dis)satisfaction with visits to primary health care centres in the past year. Yet, in order to complete the picture of the problems citizens are faced with, they were allowed to name other services or aspects of health care services they were (un)happy with. Thus, among the citizens' stories collected via the portal, making appointments at primary health care centres, as well as specialist examinations, are particularly prominent as causes of citizens' dissatisfaction.



Table 4: Citizens' dissatisfaction by type of service:

TYPE OF SERVICE		
Health care services (examinations, tests, diagnostics, etc.)	39%	61%
Administrative services (transferral of medical records, GP selection, etc.)	23%	77%
Other services	21%	79%

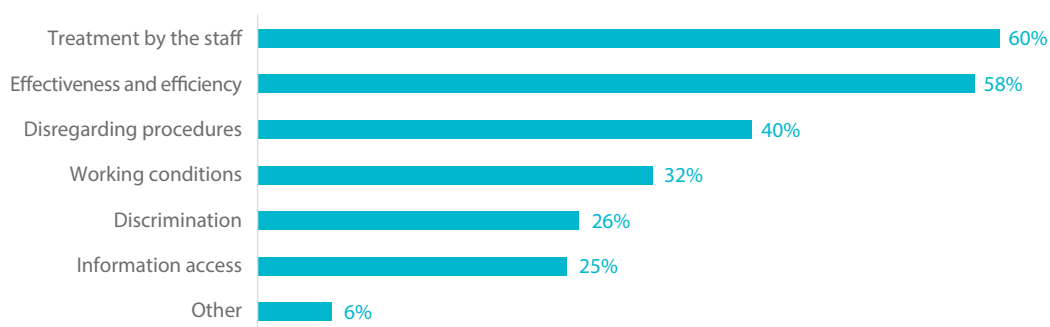
When observing individual types of services, which are in the focus of our survey, and the ratio between satisfaction and dissatisfaction, it is clear that most citizens' stories relate to health care services, i.e. examination itself and diagnostics. Dissatisfaction prevails in all types of services monitored. However, satisfaction is higher in the category of health care services.

Among praises and positive experiences, the attitude of staff to patients, especially selected GPs, is most frequently mentioned as the reason for satisfaction. Citizens' stories are related to the overall treatment, followed by those about kindness of doctors and medical staff, and then commendations for professionalism and expertise, which indicates the importance of accommodating treatment of citizens.

Also, besides kindness, professionalism and work of physicians and medical staff, the predominant reasons for satisfaction in citizens' stories are fast delivery of health services, appointments by telephone and receiving patients in agreed time slots, without waiting. However, effectiveness and efficiency, i.e. work organisation and time needed for services delivery at primary health care centres appear mostly as the cause of dissatisfaction in citizens' stories.

Among the stories with negative experience, lack of effectiveness and efficiency are most frequent causes of citizens' dissatisfaction with services provided by primary health care centres. At the same time, it should be noted that the efficiency of these services is affected by problems at appointment making, long waiting lists, telephone appointments, crowds and understaffed institutions.

Chart 11: The reasons for your dissatisfaction







Besides, given the importance attached by citizens to the lack of staff, unkindness, unprofessional conduct, lack of commitment to patients and of accessibility of both doctors and other medical staff, are all mentioned as most frequent causes of citizens' dissatisfaction. Also, individual stories testify of citizens' concerns with the new procedures, due to which they feel that "the role of doctors boils down to that of administrative workers". Although not predominant as main causes of dissatisfaction, the stories also highlight disregard of procedures, primarily in form of using personal connections and gift-giving in order to reach a health service more easily and quickly.

The doctor is reduced to administrative worker.

Similarly, although the presence of discrimination at primary health care centres does not stand out as the main cause of citizens' dissatisfaction, some testimonials of discrimination against citizens of different ethnic background, as well as persons with disabilities, indicate unequal treatment and access to public services in the area of primary health care.

Looking at the ratio between citizens' satisfaction and dissatisfaction by regions, in Eastern and Southern Serbia there are more dissatisfied citizens (76%), than in other parts of Serbia. That does not come as surprise, having in mind that in Vojvodina 87% villages have a medical office, and 33% villages in Central Serbia, in Western Serbia 27%, whereas in South East Serbia only 20% villages have a medical office!⁶

Table 5: Citizens' (dis)satisfaction by regions:

		
Eastern and Southern Serbia	28%	72%
Belgrade	39%	61%
Vojvodina	52%	48%
Central and Western Serbia	50%	50%

There are no significant differences in satisfaction level between men and women. However, analysing the citizens' stories shows that young people, aged 18-29, are much more often dissatisfied with health care services delivered. Also, as a reason of dissatisfaction, young people more often emphasize the attitude of employees compared to older fellow citizens. Similar results were obtained in quantitative survey of citizens' views.

IV.c The quality of policy making process

The research of policy making process at the MoH included the analysis of strategic framework, together with the laws regulating the area of primary health care. What was identified at the very outset in the area of health care is a high degree of fragmentation in policy

⁶ The National Gender Equality Strategy 2016-2020, "The Official Gazette of RS" no. 4, p. 20.



documents, primarily strategies, action plans and programmes. Besides, several strategies uploaded to the Ministry's website have expired time frames, and there is no information of their extension or approval of new action plans. Still, the most important strategy for this research was the Strategy for Continuous Improvement of Health Care Quality and Patients' Safety, passed in 2009 and timed for until 2015. Besides, the Health Care Development Plan was also taken into consideration, endorsed in 2010. On the other hand, regarding the legislative package that was the subject of the research two laws are relevant – the Law on Health Care and the Law on Health Insurance.

Regarding strategic framework, what can be concluded based on the findings of the research of strategic documents, is that their making is mainly the result of expert-led processes. Accordingly, public participation is mostly limited to expert meetings, which do not include general public or representatives of interested audiences. Further on, strategic papers are fragmented and not always mutually harmonised, so sometimes their purpose is unclear, while the action plans are not always available to public on the website. Finally, all strategic documents that were subject to analysis within this research have their validity dates expired, without new ones approved.

On the other hand, with regards to evidence-based policy making, the elements envisaged by the Government's Rules of Procedure are present, and that is the rationale and regulatory impact assessment. However, the conclusion of the conducted research is that the quality of the assessments is low. In other words, rationales normally contain reasons to pass the laws, without offering answers to the question how the passage of the law is expected to contribute to resolution of identified problems, or adequate analysis of the problems themselves. Then, in certain cases, parts of the regulatory impact assessments are done solely as a formal obligation, without any role in the decision-making process on proposed solutions.

Regarding the cooperation with civil society organisations and citizens' participation in the policy making process, the MoH has turned out to be the most closed one, of the three relevant ones (MoI and MESTD). Namely, public consultations normally imply expert thematic gatherings, as an outcome of cooperation among the Ministry, health care chambers, health care institutions and labour unions, which prevents broader participation of civil society organisations.

Through the research, the approval of the new Draft Law on Health Care and the Draft Law on Health Insurance was monitored too. Public debates on these two laws were held in four cities (Belgrade, Niš, Novi Sad and Kragujevac). Interestingly enough, both drafts were publicly discussed on the same day at the same time, from which it can be inferred that they were unified, quite justifiably if the process is well conducted and if discussion of both acts is meaningful. However, there is no available report on the discussions held on the website.

On the other hand, if taking a broader view of practice with the composition of working groups, on the basis of interviews with the Ministry representatives, it is visible that CSOs representatives are not involved with working groups tasked with development of draft laws. This fact, along with the research findings on the absence of public debates, indicates the continued practice of failure to include citizens and civil society in the process of policy making that concern citizens most directly, as beneficiaries of health care services.

V. Enrolment of children in pre-school institutions and primary schools

Enrolment of children in pre-school institutions (kindergarten included) and primary schools is the third area of public services encompassed by the survey. Besides the Education Development Strategy 2020, the most relevant laws regulating the enrolment process are: the Law on the Foundations of the System of Education, the Law on Primary Education, as well as the Law on Pre-School Education.

The field of children's enrolment in pre-school institutions and primary schools turned out to be the most challenging one when exploring citizens' views of satisfaction with these services, due to the difficulties that parents have in separating enrolment from other aspects of pre-school and primary school education. Therefore, the results show that albeit parents are familiar with problems at enrolment, other aspects of work in pre-school and primary school institutions, like a lack of space or curricula outdatedness, are identified as the main causes of dissatisfaction. However, much as these are important indicators of citizens' perception of pre-school and school functioning, they were not taken into consideration when defining recommendations geared towards the issue of enrolment in the first place.

Regarding the novelties in this field, the most important one is the possibility introduced (only) for parents in Belgrade, to apply for places in kindergartens via the eUprava (e-government) portal. Namely, since May 2016, parents have been able to apply for a place by simply filling out a form. However, this electronic service has not been introduced in other towns, so its outreach is rather limited.

In addition, primary school and pre-school education (prep) for children aged 5.5-6.5 are a compulsory part of curriculum. At the same time, only half of the children aged 3-3.5 are covered by pre-school education (kindergartens).⁷ Consequently, **the major difficulties occur when enrolling children in kindergartens due to the lack of available places.** Also, significant regional differences are present in view of children's coverage with this pre-school education. Namely, UNICEF's data have shown that the municipalities with largest coverage of children (above 50%) are in Belgrade and in Vojvodina.⁸ On the other hand, the municipalities with extremely low enrolment rates (below 20%) mainly belong to the group of underdeveloped municipalities. This indicates that the existing pre-school institutions' network is not adequate, i.e. it is not evenly distributed. This fact is significant for interpretations of the survey results, but also for defining recommendations.

V.a Citizens' opinion polls

The survey result analysis shows that, when regards the quality of services in pre-school institutions and primary schools, most citizens are happy with services delivered. More accurately, **over 80% citizens believe that pre-school institutions provide quality services in children's raising and education** and there are no significant differences amongst regions, or the respondents' age or education structure either. Similarly, **most citizens are satisfied with**

⁷ UNICEF. *Investment in early development and learning of children in Serbia*, UNICEF. Belgrade, 2012, p. 26.

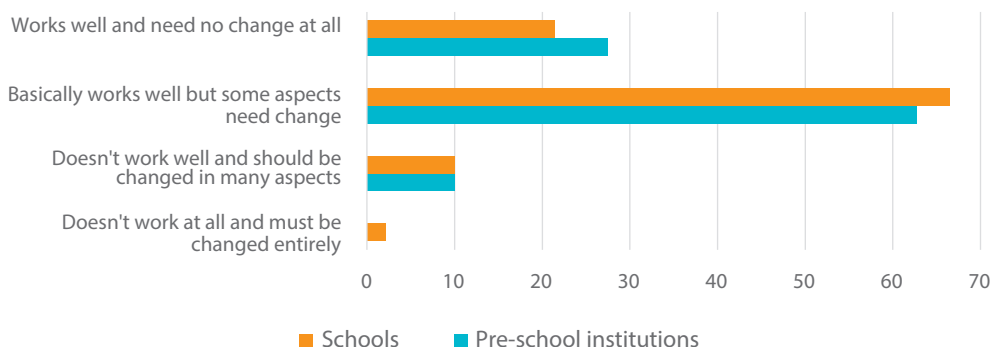
⁸ *Ibid*, 32.



the quality of pedagogic and educational services in primary schools (78%). Compared to other parts of Serbia, the highest satisfaction with primary school services is in Belgrade.

With respect of **perception of the work of pre-school institutions and primary schools**, most citizens are partly satisfied with their work, with views that certain aspects should be changed (Chart 12).

Chart 12: Which of the below statements suits your opinion best? Pre-school institution/primary school... %

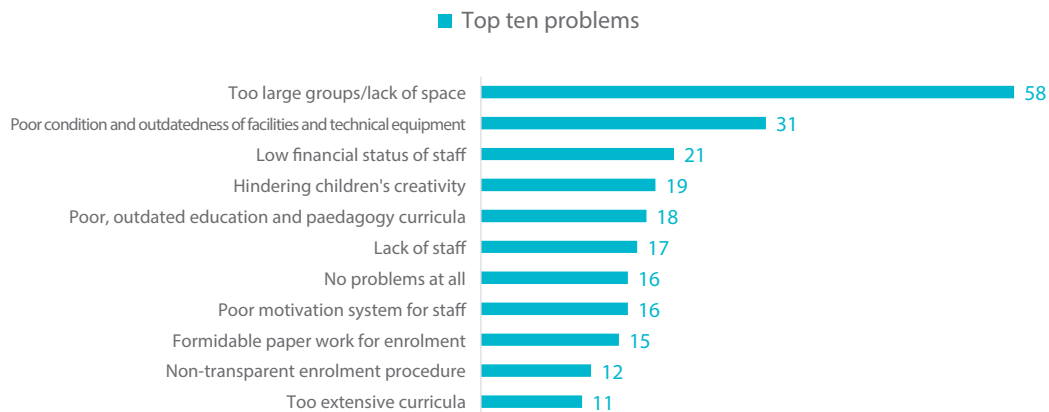


Regarding the work of pre-school institutions, respondents under 29 years of age, more than the average, believe that “pre-school institutions don’t work well and they should change in many aspects” (19%), whereas, if perception is compared among regions, this statement is supported by 17% citizens in Western and Central Serbia and only 2% in Vojvodina. When it comes to the work of primary schools, there are no significant differences to the rest of Serbia.

The **major problems** in the functioning of pre-school institutions (Chart 13), as perceived by citizens, are lack of space, i.e. too large groups (58%), then poor condition and out-of-date technical equipment and facilities (31%) and low financial status of the staff (21%). Yet, there are visible differences of citizens’ perception among different age groups. In other words, parents younger than 29, much more than the rest population, recognise the problems of formidable paper work at enrolment (34% : 15%), as well as the problem of outdated curricula (32% : 18%). On the other hand, the problem of outdated facilities and technical equipment is mainly recognised in Belgrade, compared to other parts of Serbia. Still, to the question of opting for the major problem, citizens singled out that of the lack of space, i.e. too large groups in pre-school institutions (41%).



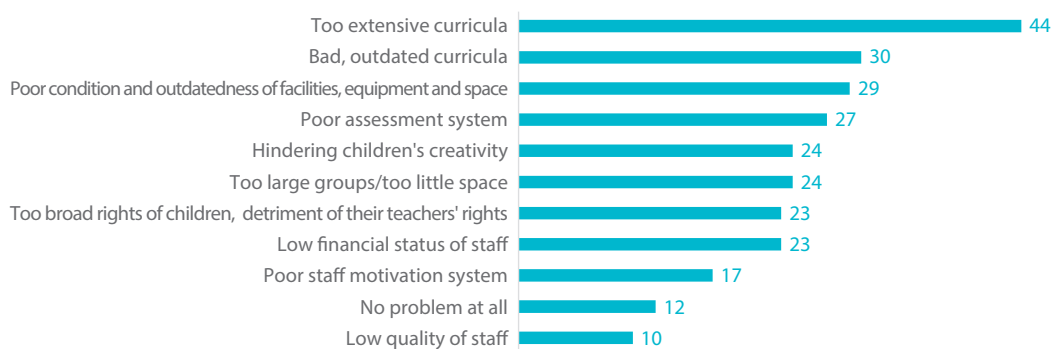
Chart 13: What problems do you find present in the work/functioning of your child's pre-school institution? %



Similarly, the staff of pre-school institutions recognise too large groups and lack of spaces as the main problem too, however, more than citizens, they also identify the problems of their low financial status, as well as understaffed pre-school institutions.

On the other hand, the greatest problems in the work of primary schools (Chart 14) are recognised by citizens as too extensive curricula (44%), then poor condition and outdatedness of facilities and technical equipment (29%), as well as outdated curricula (29%) and bad assessment system (27%). However, when they were asked to choose the most serious problem in the work of primary schools, most citizens highlighted too extensive curricula (24%).

Chart 14: What do you see as major problems in the work/functioning of primary school...? %



Yet, if we are to compare parents' views to those of public servants, we see that for primary school staff the main problem is in their low financial status and too broad rights of children to the detriment of their teachers' rights, while too extensive curricula come as third by significance.

Further, the survey results indicate that **every fifth citizen finds the procedure of pre-school enrolment complicated** (24%), while the figure is somewhat lower with regards to primary



school enrolment procedure (14%). However, when regards children's enrolment in pre-school institutions, there are conspicuous differences among different age groups. Namely, most respondents between 18 and 29 years of age find the procedure complicated, whereas the respondents aged between 30 and 39 mainly believe that it is not complicated, which shows a generational gap. Also, persons with primary school qualifications find the procedure complicated more than do those with high school and university degree.



How then do they decide that one could be enrolled if they have ten candidates with the same score?

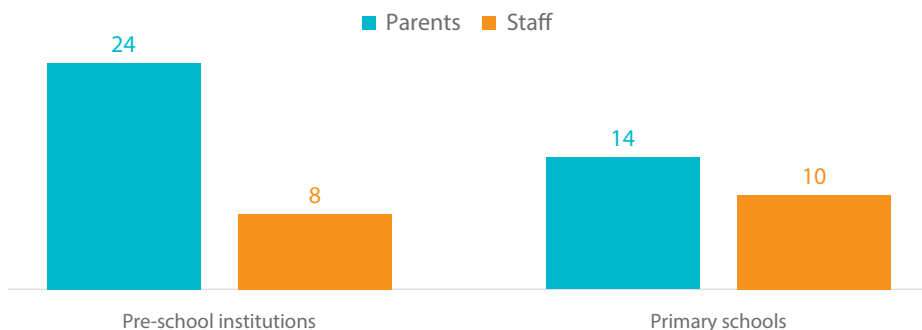


A focus group participant in Niš

Participants of Belgrade focus group named as a deficiency no records of potentially free places in kindergartens at a municipal level, compared to the number of children awaiting enrolment, as well as the presence of unclear enrolment criteria. Focus group participants in Niš, besides the insufficient number of places, underlined collusion (personal connections) at enrolment. On the other hand, bad parent information system and too lengthy enrolment procedure are the challenges of primary school enrolment.

Regarding the public servants, only 8% find the pre-school enrolment procedure complicated, while this figure is somewhat higher (10%) in case of primary school enrolment. This figure indicates differences in perception between citizens and staff working for these institutions (Chart 15).

Chart 15: Percentage of those who find the enrolment procedure complicated (parents vs. staff) %



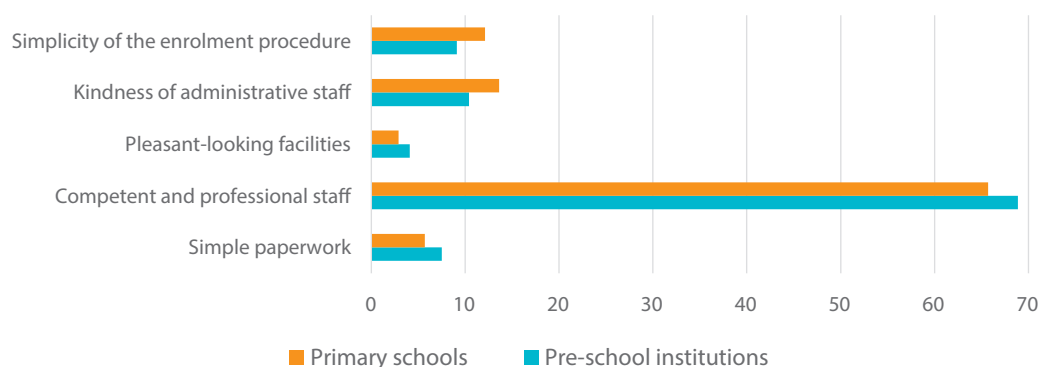
Also, most citizens get informed of pre-school and primary school enrolment procedures directly at kindergartens/schools and through acquaintances or friends. However, there are differences in terms of way of getting informed depending on the parents' gender, in case of kindergartens. The analysis shows that men, *inter alia*, always get informed directly at the pre-school institution, which is not the case with women who use friends, more than men do, to get information, as well as staff of pre-school institutions.

Further on, the staff competencies and professionalism are emphasised as the most important



aspect of children's enrolment for more than two thirds of parents, both for pre-school institutions (69%) and for primary schools (66%), as illustrated by Chart 16. This is followed by kindness of administrative staff, as the most important aspect of enrolment, and simplicity of the enrolment procedure. Among the citizens' views of the importance of individual aspects of children's enrolment in prep-schools and nurseries, there are no significant differences among age group or regions. However, it is noticeable that when choosing the most important aspect pre-school enrolment twice as many young parents aged up to 29 opted for **procedure simplicity** as the most important one (19%) as the average (9%). There are no major differences in terms of perception of importance of various enrolment aspects between citizens and staff.

Chart 16: Which of the following aspects of children's enrolment in pre-school institution / primary school is most important to you? %

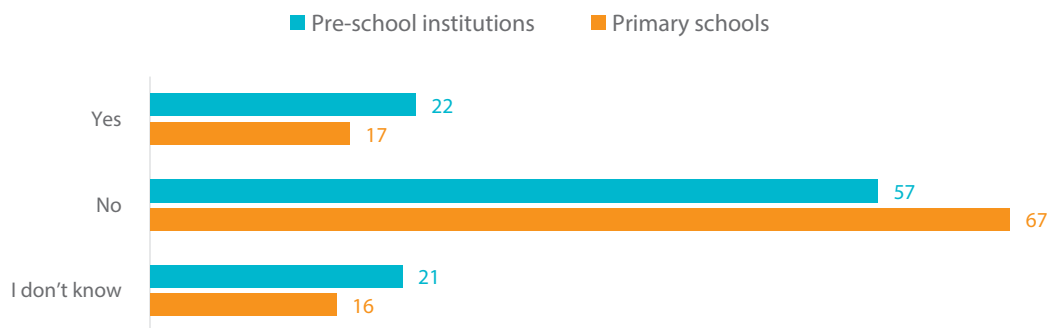


Speaking of enrolment procedures on the whole, citizens' satisfaction prevails over dissatisfaction. A vast majority is happy with the procedure of children's enrolment with pre-school institutions (over 80%), as well as with primary school enrolment (over 85%). However, **only one fourth of parents are completely satisfied with pre-school enrolment procedures (25%), whereas one third of parents are completely happy with the primary school enrolment procedure (33%).**

With regard to personal connections and informal payments, 22% parents believe these are necessary for children's enrolment in pre-school institutions, whereas 17% they are needed for primary school enrolment too (Chart 17). Yet, there are no specific differences. Therefore, for example, young parents much more than the average (39% : 22%), believe that contacts, payments or gifts are necessary to get a child enrolled in pre-school enrolment. At the same time, significantly more parents in Vojvodina (77%) think that strings or gifts are not necessary at pre-school enrolment, compared to the parents across Serbia (57%). In terms of enrolment in primary schools here are no significant differences in views of parents from different regions, however here too more parents under 29 believe that informal payment and gifts are necessary for enrolment (44%) compared to the average(17%).



Chart 17: Do you think that strings and informal payments are necessary for enrolment in pre-school institutions/primary schools?



On the other hand, **half parents (51%)** nonetheless believe that the **practice of using private contacts is frequent**, in order to get children more quickly enrolled in **pre-school institutions**. When it comes to children's enrolment in **primary school**, a little fewer than **half parents** find such practice frequent, with most young parents among them. Significantly more parents in Vojvodina, compared to other regions, believe that private contacts are never used for children's enrolment in pre-school institutions. Further on, although most of them claimed not to have contacted anyone for enrolment in pre-school institutions or primary schools, every third citizen addressed the staff of pre-school or primary school institutions at enrolment, as well as friends or influential party members. On the other hand, almost all the staff of pre-school institutions believe that strings and informal payment are not necessary which indicates a different perception vis-a-vis that of citizens. Similarly, only 6% staff in primary schools believe that strings and gifts are necessary at enrolment.

Speaking of discrimination and inequality, children of unemployed parents are perceived as a category with most difficulties to get enrolled in pre-school institutions, compared to other children (Chart 18). Then, almost every third citizen thinks it harder for children from indigent families to get enrolled in pre-school institutions, while every fourth one believes the same for Roma children. The existence of the Rulebook with Specific Requirements for Children's Enrolment in Pre-School Institutions from 2011 should be underscored, as it prioritises children from socially vulnerable groups for enrolment, with children with difficulties in

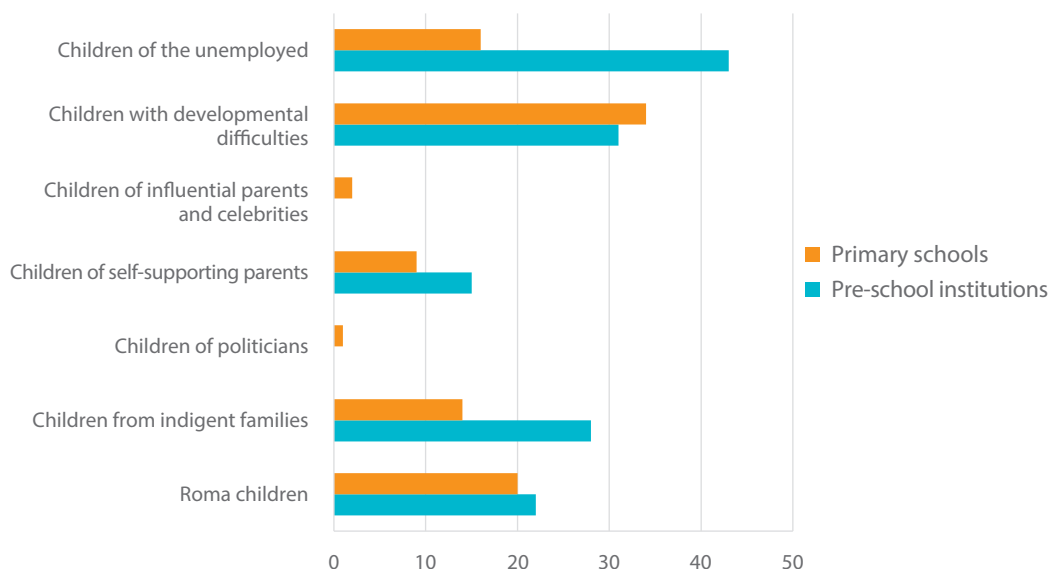
Half of the parents (51%) believe that the practice of using private contacts is frequent in order to get children more quickly enrolled in pre-school institutions.

psycho-physical development belonging to them, as well as those from non-stimulating environments (Roma children). Yet, citizens' perception marks UNICEF's survey of pre-school education coverage of children, conducted in 2011, and still relevant. Namely, the report on "Investments in education in early childhood in Serbia"⁹ highlights the very low coverage of these marginalised groups of children with pre-school education, compared to the national average. For instance, only 8.2% Roma children aged 3 to 5 are within the pre-school education system.

⁹ UNICEF. *Investment in education in early childhood in Serbia*. UNICEF, September 2012, Belgrade.
http://www.unicef.rs/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/WPUlaganje_u_rani_razvoj_i_ucenje_dece.pdf



Chart 18: To what extent is it easier or more difficult for the following categories to get enrolled at pre-school/primary school institutions, compared to average children? %
(a little more difficult+ much more difficult)



Also, it is worrisome that citizens believe children with developmental difficulties, i.e. certain degree of disability, have more difficulties enrolling in both pre-school and primary school institutions, which is very telling of **the lack of inclusiveness in the institutions and potential presence of discrimination**. It is estimated that 5% children have difficulties in development or disabilities, and only 1.2% enrolled children had development difficulties or disability, which indicates **that children with developmental difficulties have four times less chances to attend pre-school educational and paedagogical institutions at the age between 3 and 5 years**.¹⁰ Situational analysis conducted by UNICEF provides examples of discrimination by staff members, and also physical inaccessibility of both pre-school institutions and primary schools.¹¹

On the other hand, when regards primary schools, it is again UNICEF data that estimate only one third of children with developmental difficulties are covered by education in Serbia. Also, unlike pre-school institutions, primary education for children with development difficulties and disabilities still unfolds through two parallel systems – mainstream and special. Despite inclusion, records show that half the children with disabilities are still attending educational system in segregated environment, more specifically – in special schools. It is significant that 27% parents – almost every third one – in the conducted situational analysis named the difficulties they experienced when enrolling their children in primary school.¹²

¹⁰ Situational analysis: Position of children with developmental difficulties and disabilities in the RS. NOOIS, Belgrade 2017, p. 41. <http://www.unicef.rs/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/SitAn-deca-sa-smetnjama-u-razvoju-i-invaliditetom.pdf>

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 45.

¹² *Ibid*.

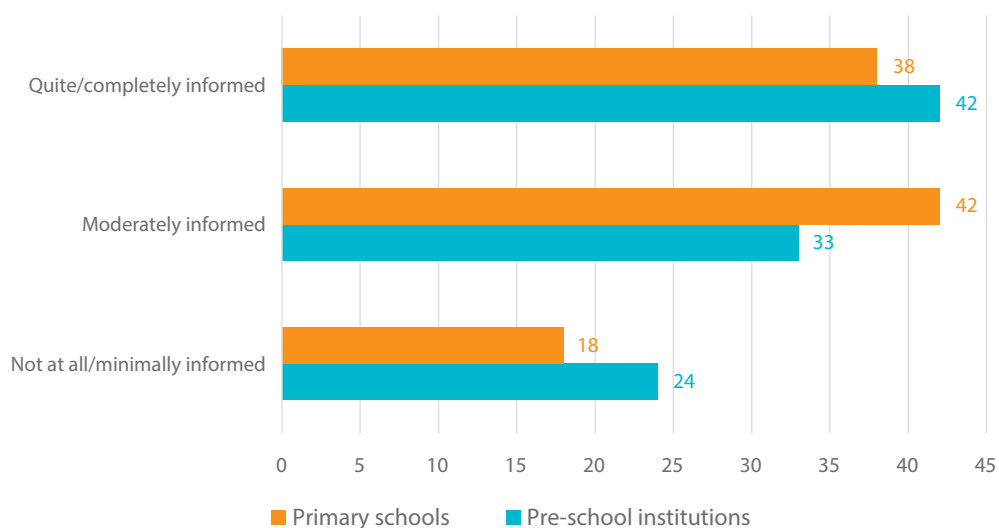


Yet, the data on coverage with both pre-school and primary education are just estimates, because there is no information on the accurate number of children with developmental difficulties and disabilities “due to the mutually non-aligned definitions of disability in various laws, as well as underdeveloped assessment tools in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”.¹³

However, on the other hand, the staff at pre-school institutions do not share the parents’ perception. Namely, the results indicate that when speaking of these four groups of children (children of unemployed parents, children from indigent families, Roma children and children with developmental difficulties and disabilities), the staff members in most cases believe that it is easier for such children to get enrolled in pre-school institutions and primary schools.

Also, **most parents believe to be moderately, quite or fully informed of their rights, relative to their requests to pre-school institutions and primary schools** (Chart 19). Most parents who think they are completely informed come from Vojvodina (20%). Yet, every fourth and fifth parent, respectively, believes not to be informed enough of his/her rights when it comes to the work of pre-school institutions/primary schools.

Chart 19: Are you informed of your rights regarding your requests to pre-school institutions/primary schools? %



At the same time, most parents believe that it is primarily the educators/teachers who should inform them of their rights and only then principals and media. Similarly, according to the survey results show that most parents believe they should be informed of their rights directly at the pre-school institutions/primary schools, orally or by posters, then via media and the internet.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 14.



V.b Results of the national campaign



Within the campaign “ME in the Spotlight”, conducted between 20 April 2017 and 15 January 2018, **324** stories of citizens’ experience with using the services of pre-school institutions (and primary schools) were collected via the mojauprava.rs portal. The focus was primarily on the enrolment services, but also on other aspects of these institutions’ work. Majority of citizens, **54%**, were dissatisfied with services provided, against the **46%** satisfied.

Table 8: Services assessed by citizens:

Enrolment in pre-school institutions	34%
Enrolment in primary schools	37%
Other services	29%

The service of enrolment in pre-school institution and primary schools was most often named by citizens as reason for their (dis)satisfaction within the past year. Speaking solely of dissatisfaction, children’s enrolment in kindergartens and other pre-school institutions got by far most negative marks. Yet, in order to make the picture of problems that citizens are facing more complete, they were given the opportunity to name other services or aspects of these institutions’ services that they are (dis)satisfied with. Thus, in given answers and collected stories, the issue of curriculum quality and didactic tools is in the limelight, especially for primary schools.

Table 9: Citizens’ dissatisfaction by type of service:

TYPE OF SERVICE		
Pre-School enrolment	47%	53%
Primary school enrolment	54%	46%
Other services	36%	64%

Looking at the individual types of services in the focus of our survey and the ratio between satisfaction and dissatisfaction, citizens’ dissatisfaction with procedures of enrolment in pre-school institutions is noticeable, against the primary school enrolment that citizens are mostly happy with. This can be accounted for by the fact that the enrolment requirements for primary schools are more transparent and simple than those for kindergartens, where due to the lack of capacities there are not always clear-cut criteria for enrolment, and neither is there an efficient way of informing citizens of all enrolment aspects.

In citizens’ stories explaining the reasons for their satisfaction, they mainly stress the treatment by staff members, both at pre-school and primary school enrolment, and in general regarding the attitudes of teachers/educators. Then, in the stories with positive examples from primary schools, the prevailing aspect is not that of enrolment *per se*, but primarily the treatment of parents and children by the teaching staff. On the other hand, when regards



satisfaction with pre-school services, citizens name enrolment efficiency, i.e. simplicity and speed of procedure as a cause of satisfaction, along with the kindness of staff members. Besides the enrolment, working conditions and creative work with children are also given as reasons for satisfaction.

As the main reasons for citizens' dissatisfaction with services delivered by primary schools and pre-school institutions, disregard for procedures at enrolment and staff attitudes are most striking. In citizens' stories relative to dissatisfaction with pre-school institutions, the prevailing aspects are those about enrolment. Citizens primarily emphasise collusion, as well as inefficiency in service delivery, i.e. complicated procedures and long waiting for enrolment.



Chart 20: Reasons for your dissatisfaction %



Regarding the primary school enrolment, citizens' stories highlight disregard for procedures and their slowness as reasons for dissatisfaction first and foremost. Still, there are stories not pertinent to enrolment itself, rather to unprofessional and unkind teaching staff. Most citizens are happy with primary school enrolment, as pointed by the survey, but they are unhappy with other aspects of school functioning. Also, in citizens' stories discrimination appears as cause of dissatisfaction, which calls for additional attention. Difficulties to obtain information and malfunctioning of e-government are also the reasons for dissatisfaction.

Yet, when looking at the ratio between satisfaction and dissatisfaction with pre-school institutions and primary schools by regions, there are many more satisfied citizens (61%) in Vojvodina compared to other parts of Serbia. Interestingly, Vojvodina is the only region where total satisfaction prevails over total dissatisfaction, while in Belgrade the number of satisfied citizens is tantamount to that of the dissatisfied.

Table 10 Citizens' (dis)satisfaction by regions:

		
Eastern and Southern Serbia	40%	60%
Belgrade	50%	50%
Vojvodina	61%	39%
Central and Western Serbia	42%	58%



V.c The quality of policy making process

The key strategic document that the education policy in Serbia relies on is the Education Development Strategy by 2020, passed in October 2012 establishing the purpose, goals, directions, tools and mechanisms of educational system development. Then for the area of public services in the focus of our research, three laws are particularly relevant: the Law on the Foundations of the System of Education, the Law on Primary Education and the Law on Pre-School Education.

The Law on the Foundations of the System of Education regulates the bases of the primary and secondary education and paedagogy system and is considered to be an umbrella law in education. The current Law came into force in 2017, however during the research process it was still the 2009 Law that was in force, having undergone several amendments in 2011, 2013 and 2015, also taken into account for our research. The Law on Primary Education and the Law on Pre-School Education are special laws regulating the areas of primary and pre-school education respectively. The first one was passed in 2013 and the second one in 2010. Both laws were subject to amendments in 2017, in order to align to the novelties brought by the overarching law.

Also, what is important to mention given the initial passage of the laws in 2009, 2010 and 2013, it is difficult to completely follow to what extent the process was evidence-based back then, i.e. how inclusive and transparent, only on the basis of available documents. Therefore, in this analysis we took stock of both, amendments to these laws and of the recent process of the new law promulgation, on the basis of available documents and information we reached primarily through interviews with managers and civil servants at the Ministry, but also by interviewing representatives of CSOs and experts on the field. Thus a more complete picture regarding the policy making and coordinating process for the given area was created.

With regards to the evidence-basedness of public policies, the research results show that the quality of conducted analyses depends on individual efforts and that the quality of policy making process do not necessarily improve over time. Thus, if we take for example the Draft Law on the Foundations of the System of Education from 2009, the rationale and regulatory impact assessment included some very detailed indicators, pointing to the need to pass a new law, with detailed financial costing for each new arrangement proposed by the draft. On the other hand, all amendments to this Law do not include adequate analysis of problems and proposed policies that should inform decision makers, neither the relevant quantitative and qualitative data of consequence for understanding the actual state of play.

Also, the laws regulating pre-school and primary school education indicate an inconsistent quality of conducted analyses in policy making process. Thus, the Law on Pre-School Education, passed in 2010, did not include regulatory impact assessment in accordance with the opinion of the National Public Policy Secretariat, whereas the 2013 Law on Primary Education is mentioned in the context of all objections that the Office had were accepted by the law proponent (the Ministry), which shows in action the efforts to conduct regulatory impact assessment in accordance with the Government's Rules of Procedure and to respect the relevant authority's opinion.



On the other hand, given that the new Law on the Foundations of the System of Education was passed during this research, it is worth the effort to take stock of that process. The general conclusion inferred from interviews organised with MESTD representatives is that draft regulations were developed within very tight deadlines. A detailed analysis of this Draft rationale shows that, despite the inclusion of all formally required elements in the document, the major part of the rationale is explanations of legal instruments and individual arrangements. Despite providing the reasons for adoption of the new Law, the text itself does not clarify what specific problems the Law is expected to resolve and how the proposed solutions would contribute to the set objective.

So, the analysis of these elements precisely is of vital importance for better quality of proposals, as well as for timely and thorough consideration of options for regulating certain areas in education, and it unveils the deficiencies of the very process of policy making. Documents and opinions of relevant authorities on analyses conducted for adoption, and of amendments to these laws over years, show the absence of improvement. What is imposed as conclusion is that at the Ministry, i.e. at the Department for Pre-School and Primary School Education, there are no conditions for policy making, which would be evidence-based, and also that there is misunderstanding of certain number of managers over what the process actually implies. Consequently, the research findings indicate that regulatory impact assessment is done, first and foremost, in order to meet the formal requirement, whereas, most often, it does not play its essential role in adequate defining of problems and formulation of alternative regulatory arrangements. On the other hand, during the field research, an example was found where draft law development was embarked upon in an analytic way with genuine considerations for various options supported by accurate quantitative data. However, it stands out as a result of individual, go-it-alone efforts, not as an outcome of the system set-up.

With regard to the inclusiveness of policy making process, i.e. citizens' participation, as well as that of civil society organisations and expert audiences, the results also show a large room for improvement. Namely, public debates at law adoption are held within legal time frame. However, they are perceived as one-off events, not ongoing process, and, just like in case of the other two ministries, they only come in the end of policy making process, which reduces their role of vehicles to improve the quality of draft laws. Also, what is worrisome is the identified trend of not holding public debates for amendments to laws. More specifically, amendments are made at random, without the usual processes and procedures for passage of new legislation, although amendments often bring vital changes in regulating a certain area. So, although in principle it is recognised as important, the contribution of civil society to policy proposals is given only when drafts are practically developed and, *ipso facto*, the room for adjustments limited.

Recommendations

The survey results in the area of public services have indicated the existence of identical challenges that citizens are faced with when using them, i.e. similar problems mark the work of the police administrative service, primary health care centres, pre-school institutions and primary schools. Therefore, the following text will first identify the common problems and offer common recommendations for improving the process of delivering three types of public services, but also that of policy making in three ministries. It will be followed by an overview of problems and recommendations typical of each individual area.

Every recommendation is related to specific problems identified during the survey and campaign conducted during the project (thus the respective numbers of recommendations follow the number of problems). Also, on the basis of understanding of researchers and experts on the project, for each recommendation a deadline for its implementation and the relevant institution are proposed. Deadlines for implementation are colour-coded and stated in the following form:

- Short term (up to one year) – marked with red colour
- Medium term (up to two years) – marked with yellow colour
- Long term (up to three years) – marked with green colour

With certain recommendations, besides the implementation deadline, it is also emphasised that the implementation needs to be performed steadily.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development The Ministry of the Interior The Ministry of Health

Problem(s) identified in all three ministries:

Data sources:

I. Problems in functioning and service delivery to citizens

1. Unkind and unprofessional attitude of public servants/staff providing public services to citizens;

Opinion polls
The website mojauprava.rs
Focus groups

2. Collusion and corruption as means of obtaining the necessary public services;

Opinion polls
The website mojauprava.rs

3. Citizens uninformed of their rights and duties when using public services;

Opinion polls
Focus groups

4. Lack of feedback-collecting mechanisms regarding citizens' satisfaction with services delivered;

Documentation analysis



II. Insufficient quality of the policy making process

5. Insufficiently evidence-based public policies;

Documentation analysis

6. Insufficient involvement of citizens and CSOs with the policy making process;

Documentation analysis

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Improvement of service delivery to citizens

Recommendation 1.

Develop a system of motivation and professional development for public servants working with citizens, as well as quality and user-friendly performance of tasks.

Implementation deadline:



Long term

Relevant institution:

- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
- National Public Administration Academy

Recommendation 2.1.

Introduce a higher number of e-services in order to narrow the room for corruption.

Implementation deadline:



Long term

Relevant institution:

- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
- Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government
- Office for Information Technology and E-Government

Recommendation 2.2.

Develop a code of conduct for public servants working on public service delivery in order to ensure law enforcement and prevention of abuse.

Implementation deadline:

Relevant institution:



Long term

- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development

Recommendation 2.3.

Deliver trainings in order to raise awareness of public servants of the importance of ethics and professional integrity in the process of public service delivery.

Implementation deadline:

Relevant institution:



Medium term

- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development

Recommendation 2.4.

Devise and realise a broadband awareness-raising campaign for citizens and public servants not to participate in corruptive actions.

Implementation deadline:

Relevant institution:



Short term

- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
- Anti-Corruption Agency

Recommendation 3.

Conduct media campaigns regularly, to inform the citizens of the rights they have when using public services.

Implementation deadline:

Relevant institution:




Short term

- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development


Recommendation 4.1

Define as reform priority and phase in all three systems one of quality management instruments, preferably CAF (Common Assessment Framework), with centralised competences for monitoring and coordination of the policy for public service quality improvement.




Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government (defining, coordination, monitoring)• Ministry of Interior (implementation)• Ministry of Health (implementation)• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (implementation)
Recommendation 4.2.	

Introduce citizens' feed-back channels both in-situ and via the internet.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Interior• Ministry of Health• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
Recommendation 4.3.	


Regularly, at least once a year, conduct public opinion surveys on citizens' satisfaction with services delivered.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term (and then steadily)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Interior• Ministry of Health• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development

II. Improvement of policy making process

Recommendation 5.1.	
---------------------	--


Amend the Law on State Administration and introduce the obligation of developing evidence-based initial grounds before developing a draft law which is to significantly change the given area.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Government (approve the Bill)• National Assembly (pass the Law)




Recommendation 5.2.

Passage of the Law on Planning System and of the Regulation on Public Policy Management Methodology, Regulatory Impact Assessment and Contents of Individual Documents, regulating the obligations of all stakeholders in policy making.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Interior• Ministry of Health• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development


Recommendation 5.3.

Deliver professional development and coaching for public servants working on policy making in order to perform analytic task.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Interior• Ministry of Health• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development• National Public Policy Secretariat• National Public Administration Academy


Recommendation 5.4.

Regularly analyse and use the results of surveys on citizens' satisfaction with public services and citizens' feedback (c.f. recommendations 5.1. i 5.2.), as a basis for developing and implementing the policy of service delivery.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Assembly

Recommendation 5.5.


Define and apply the tools for analyzing policy impact on gender equality in order for gender mainstreaming in policy making.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Public Policy Secretariat• Gender Equality Coordination Centre (and individual ministries for implementation too)




Recommendation 6.1.

Amend the Law on State Administration to introduce an obligation for national authorities to inform the public when commencing development of legislation, via their respective web pages or the e-government portal.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term (the already drafted amendments, submitted to the Government for consideration, have envisaged these novelties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government• National Assembly


Recommendation 6.2.

And the Law on State Administration to introduce an obligation of consultations with all relevant stakeholders during the working stage of legislation development, including relevant associations, professional audience and other stakeholders.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term (the already drafted amendments, submitted to the Government for consideration, have envisaged these novelties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government• National Assembly

Recommendation 6.3.

More specifically regulate the work of working groups preparing laws and strategies, in order to have representatives of civil society, besides the representatives of relevant authorities, involved with the work of the working groups. (The recommendation implies amendments to the Regulation on Principles for Internal Organisation and Job Systemisation in Ministries, Special Organisations and Government Services)

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government



Ministry of Interior

Problem(s) identified:

Data source(s):

I. Problems of insufficient capacities of the police administrative service

1. Insufficient technical capacities of the police administrative service;

The website mojauprava.rs
Focus groups

2. Understaffed and unequally developed capacities of the police administrative service across Serbia;

The website mojauprava.rs
Focus groups

3. Insufficiently trained staff of the police administrative service;

The website mojauprava.rs
Focus groups

4. E-payment when using services of the police administrative services not enabled;

The website mojauprava.rs
Focus groups

II. Problems of the insufficiently developed communication and citizens' information

5. Citizens insufficiently informed of possibilities to use e-services;

Opinion polls
Focus groups

6. Insufficiently transparent information on procedures applied when using the services of the police administrative service (implementation of the Law on General Administrative Procedure);

Focus groups
The website mojauprava.rs

7. Unclear mechanisms for citizens' appeals when using the services of the police administrative service;

Focus group
Opinion polls

III. Problems with insufficiently efficient work of the police administrative service

8. Several visits to the police administrative service for issuing one document alone;

The website mojauprava.rs

9. Long queuing in the police administrative service despite the appointment made;

The website mojauprava.rs
Focus group
Opinion polls

IV. Problems of insufficient accessibility and availability of services provided by the police administrative service

10. Aggravated position of persons with disabilities, mainly in terms of physical access and lack of conformity of the services provided by the police administrative service for persons with fully or partly impaired vision;

Opinion polls




RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Improving capacities of the police administrative service


Recommendation 1.

Modernise the technical aspects and infrastructure (both software and hardware) used in providing e-services to citizens by the police administrative service and conduct proper staff training.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	• Ministry of Interior


Recommendation 2.

Analyse the number of citizens' requests and workload of certain services within the police administrative service and, accordingly, decide on the number of public servants and windows (counters) in each police administrative service.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Interior


Recommendation 3.

Organise additional training for using ID issuing software and other technical equipment for the police administrative service staff.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Interior • National Public Administration Academy

Recommendation 4.

Enable citizens' e-payment within the police administrative service.


Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	• Ministry of Interior



II. Improving communication and citizens' information


Recommendation 5.

Conduct media campaigns on ways and novelties in providing police administrative services, promoting the Mol and e-government websites as points to find all information of the existing e-services in ID issuance.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Interior


Recommendation 6.

Introduce a special counter (similar to the so-called info-desk) for informing citizens of the necessary procedures when applying for issuance of identification documents.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	• Ministry of Interior


Recommendation 7.1.

Provide posters and leaflets on appeals and citizens' rights protection mechanisms within police administrative services.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	• Ministry of Interior

Recommendation 7.2.

Develop clear and transparent appeal mechanisms for citizens when using services of the police administrative service.


Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Interior

III. Enhancing the efficiency of service delivery




Recommendation 8.1.

Enable electronic application for ID issuance through the euprava.gov.rs website.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Interior• Office for Information Technology and E-Government


Recommendation 8.2.

Enable servicing the produced IDs to citizens by post, to home address.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Interior

Recommendation 9.


Where there are spatial facilities, separate the counters at the police administrative service for clients with appointment and those without it, and where not applicable separate their time slots during the day.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Interior

IV. Accessible and available services

Recommendation 10.1.


Adjust the access to all services of the police administrative service for persons with disabilities.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Interior




Recommendation 10.2.

Introduce the obligation of all relevant websites (MUP, euprava.gov.rs) having software solutions adjusted to persons with disabilities; make website adjustments in line with this obligation.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Interior• Office for Information Technology and E-Government

Recommendation 10.3.

Professional development of staff delivering services, to train them for treatment of persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups of population, as well as to correctly apply the legally binding provisions on service delivery.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Interior• National Public Administration Academy



Ministry of Health

Problem(s) identified:

Data source(s):

I. Problems of insufficient capacities in primary health care centres

1. Primary health care centres insufficiently equipped to support all the novelties introduced in the work of primary health care centres;

Opinion polls
Focus groups
The website mojauprava.rs

2. Primary health care centres understaffed in medical profiles;

Opinion polls

3. Unequal coverage with primary health care centres across Serbia;

The website mojauprava.rs
Documentation analysis

II. Problems of insufficiently developed communication and information for citizens

4. Lack of citizens' information of patients' rights and of the novelties introduced in the operating system of primary health care centres;

Opinion polls

5. Lack of knowledge about patients' rights' protection when using the services of primary health care centres;

Opinion polls

6. Absence of effective mechanisms to monitor patients' satisfaction with primary health care services;

Documentation analysis

III. Problems of insufficient efficiency when providing services of primary health care centres

7. Long waiting time at primary health care centres despite the fixed appointments;

Focus groups
The website mojauprava.rs

8. Difficulties to reach a doctor at primary health care centres in emergency cases (for the following day), i.e. no partition between therapy prescription for acute patients from emergency examinations;

Focus groups
The website mojauprava.rs

9. Voluminous paperwork of medical staff at primary health care centres;

Opinion polls
The website mojauprava.rs

10. Medical staff "resisting" novelties introduced into the primary health care centre work;

Opinion polls

11. Collusion and corruption when using the primary health care centre services;

Opinion polls
Focus groups
The website mojauprava.rs

IV. Problems of insufficient accessibility and availability of primary health care centres services

12. Aggravated access for persons with disabilities to primary health care centre services;

Opinion polls



13. Low awareness of medical staff that persons with disabilities have aggravated access to primary health care centre services;

Opinion polls

14. Aggravated access to health care services for persons from socially vulnerable groups;


Documentation analysis
Opinion polls

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Primary health care centres capacity building


Recommendation 1.

Technical capacities (computers, card readers, etc.) of primary health care centres to be upgraded in parallel with the process of introducing novelties into the primary health care operating system (such as health care cards or e-prescriptions).

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	• Ministry of Health


Recommendation 2.

Analyse the number of patients by individual primary health care centres and, accordingly, decide on the number of physicians, with a rule of taking 15 minutes for each session. This limits the number of patients per doctor.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Health

Recommendation 3.

Enhance the accessibility of medical offices and primary health care centres in parts of Serbia not adequately covered by the network of these institutions (e.g. by introducing mobile medical offices into the rural and scarcely populated areas).


Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	• Ministry of Health



II. Improving communication and citizens' information


Recommendation 4.1.

Conduct media campaigns to inform the citizens of patients' rights as well as of all foreseen novelties in the operating system of primary health care centres.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Health


Recommendation 4.2.

Develop leaflets and posters to place in primary health care centres to inform citizens of patients' rights.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Health


Recommendation 5.

Promote the role of Citizens' Advisor on Protection of Patients' Rights as well as the Protector of Insured Persons' Rights as the most important safeguard for patients' rights.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Health

Recommendation 6.

Improve the system of citizens' satisfaction measurement by the Institute for Public Health "Dr Milan Jovanović Batut" through developing tools such as applications, SMS services, websites, which citizens can use to simply and quickly rate the services of individual primary health centres.


Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Health



III. Improving the work efficiency of primary health care centres


Recommendation 7.

Achieve balanced numbers of patients per doctor – and, where necessary – increase the number of doctors, so that individual doctors should have enough time to allocate per patient(c.f. Recommendation 2)

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	• Ministry of Health


Recommendation 8.1.

Separate time slots for patients coming for urgent examination from those with appointments.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Health


Recommendation 8.2.

Increase the number of doctors charged with emergency examinations.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Health

Recommendation 8.3.


Introduce e-prescription into all primary health care centres, thus enabling the patients with long-term prescribed therapy to come for extension twice a year, and by the same token reducing the workload of physicians.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	• Ministry of Health




Recommendation 9.1.

Simplify the administrative procedures in primary health care centres, e.g. by leaving out the hard copy register.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	• Ministry of Health


Recommendation 9.2.

Intensify the introduction of e-services into the primary health care.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	• Ministry of Health


Recommendation 10.1.

Consult medical workers when making public policies to introduce novelties into the primary health care system in order to recognise potential obstacles and to ensure support to those working directly with service users, i.e. with patients.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Health

Recommendation 10.2.

Conduct surveys on medical workers' attitudes to the satisfaction with primary health centres' operations in order to identify problems in operations.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	• Ministry of Health

Recommendation 11.

Promote the work of Anti-Corruption Commission and make its work more transparent.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
--------------------------	-----------------------



Short term

• Ministry of Health

IV. Accessible and available services of primary health care centres

Recommendation 12.1.

Get the representatives of association dealing with protection of vulnerable groups' rights involved with making policies that regulate the area of primary health care.

Implementation deadline:

Relevant institution:



Short term

• Ministry of Health

Recommendation 12.2.

Analyse the access for persons with various forms of disabilities to primary health care services (e.g. dentistry or gynaecology services).

Implementation deadline:

Relevant institution:



Short term

• Ministry of Health

Recommendation 13.

Build the capacities of medical staff for treatment of persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups.

Implementation deadline:

Relevant institution:



Medium term

• Ministry of Health

Recommendation 14.1.

Work on disseminating information for vulnerable groups and facilitate the procedures necessary for their exercising rights to health care.

Implementation deadline:

Relevant institution:



Short term

• Ministry of Health



Recommendation 14.2.

Improve the network of primary health care institutions in order to enhance its availability for all citizens (c.f. Recommendation 3).

Implementation deadline:

Relevant institution:



Medium term

• Ministry of Health



The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development

Problem(s) identified:

Data source(s):

I. Problems with lack of capacities

Pre-school institutions

1. Lack of capacities in pre-school institutions compared to the number of children;

Opinion polls
Focus groups
The website mojauprava.rs

2. Uneven coverage of different Serbian region with pre-school institutions' network;

Focus groups
Documentation analysis

II. Problems with insufficiently developed communication and citizens' information

Pre-school institutions

3. Difficulties in finding all the information needed on enrolment deadlines and procedures;

Focus groups
The website mojauprava.rs

4. Lack of information about free places left in kindergartens;

Focus groups
The website mojauprava.rs

Osnovne škole

5. Poor system of parent information for their children's enrolment;

Focus groups

III. Problems with insufficient efficiency at providing enrolment services

Pre-school institutions

6. Voluminous paperwork at enrolment;

Focus groups
The website mojauprava.rs

7. Non-transparent enrolment criteria;

Focus groups

IV. Problems with accessibility

Pre-school institutions and primary schools

8. Aggravated enrolment of children with developmental difficulties or some form of disability;

Documentation analysis

9. Physical inaccessibility of pre-school institutions and primary schools to children with disabilities;

Documentation analysis




RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Enhancing the capacities of pre-school institutions


Recommendation 1.

Increase set-asides for pre-school education and make a better use of partnerships with potential donors and private sector in order to further build the capacities of pre-school institutions.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development

Recommendation 2.

Reconsider the decision to have the local self-governments' budgets incur all the costs of financing the work of pre-school institutions, especially in the context of the position of the least developed municipalities in Serbia.


Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development

II. Improving communication and citizens' information

Pre-school institutions

Recommendation 3.


Introduce a website or portal as a hub for publishing all enrolment procedures and necessary documents pertinent to enrolment procedures, under the oversight of MESTD.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development• Pre-school education




Recommendation 4.


Introduce a website or portal (c.f. Recommendation 3) as a central database on free places in pre-school and nursery institutions, to be regularly updated by all pre-school institutions and supervised by the MESTD.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development• Pre-school education
Primary schools	
Recommendation 5.1.	

Introduce the obligation of developing websites for all primary schools through which citizens can get timely information on all deadlines and enrolment procedures.


Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development• Primary schools
Recommendation 5.2.	

Enable the electronic submission of documents for enrolment.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development• Primary schools
III. Enhancing the efficiency of service delivery	
Pre-school institutions	
Recommendation 6.	




Enable e-enrolment of children to kindergartens via the website e-uprava.gov.rs (the pilot e-service for the City of Belgrade as a role model).

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development• Office for Information Technology and E-Government

Recommendation 7.


Develop clear criteria for admission of children to pre-school institutions and make them publicly available via all relevant websites, to inform the parents and to enable the reduction of discretion at admission decisions.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development

IV. accessibility of pre-school institutions and primary schools


Recommendation 8.1.

Conduct a campaign to promote the practice of parents reporting discrimination cases at children's enrolment.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development

Recommendation 8.2.


Conduct trainings for staff to reduce prejudice and stereotypes against children with disabilities or developmental difficulties.

Implementation deadline:	Relevant institution:
 Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development



Recommendation 9.

Adjust the access to all pre-school institutions and primary schools to persons with disabilities, including ensuring unhindered movement of children in these institutions.

Implementation deadline:		Relevant institution:
	Medium term	• Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development

Research methodology

When conducting documentation analysis of the policy making processes at three ministries, a combined approach of field and desk research was applied. During the field research, i.e. primary data collection, research questions were created on the basis of the relevant SIGMA Principles of Public Administration. The research endeavoured to answer the following questions:

1. Are public policies, made by relevant ministries, evidence-based?
2. Has regulatory impact assessment been conducted in the policy making process at relevant ministries and, if yes, how?
3. Have policy documents and regulations been prepared in an inclusive way enabling active participation of civil society and public, and to what extent?
4. Have policy documents and regulations been prepared in an inclusive way, enabling coordination of positions within the Government?
5. Are the relevant policy documents and regulations publicly available and to what extent?
6. Do the organisational set-up and human resources within the relevant ministries (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of the Interior) enable evidence-based and inclusive policy making, and to what extent?
7. Do the relevant ministries have cooperation with the European Integration Office in order to transpose the EU *Acquis*, and to what extent?

When providing answers to these questions, the case-study approach was applied, by analysing the specific, above mentioned policy documents and legislation, for each policy area.

On the other hand, as early as at the stage of methodology preparation, an overview of relevant literature for the area under research was prepared. This overview was further enriched when the research started, and, by filing requests for access to information of public importance, the research team got insight into the (available) archived materials pertinent to the process of relevant policy document making in the selected areas.

Then, in accordance with the seven listed research questions, a table for interview transcript coding was prepared, organised by the key thematic categories under these questions (e.g. inclusiveness, coordination of positions within the Government, evidence-basedness, etc.). Materials collected through archive and desk research were paired with the coded parts of text in order for data triangulation. A descriptive interpretative analysis of the coded text was undertaken, in accordance with the orientation and organisation of research questions.



Citizens' opinion polls on satisfaction with public services in selected areas

The main goal of the polls was to establish how satisfied citizens are with the services of document issuance, provided by the police administrative service, as well as with health care services at the primary level and with educational services at the levels of pre-school and primary education (first of all with children's enrolment in pre-school institutions and schools). The polls were made operational on the basis of several dimensions of citizens' "encounters" with services in these sectors, at the level of detected perception regarding:

1. Contact – first-hand experience with the said institutions within the past year;
2. General assessment of orientation and user-friendliness for citizens, as well as general functioning;
3. Technical aspects of work – organisational level, condition of equipment, etc;
4. Human capacities in the said spheres – professionalism, treatment of citizens, motivation;
5. Efficiency – service delivery (general), deadlines, length of procedures, etc;
6. Service quality – assessment of general quality and reasons for not having higher quality;
7. Service availability to all categories of citizens, with special focus on vulnerable categories;
8. Legislative framework – whether a law is good and whether it is complied with;
9. Integrity – reputation, trust, corruption independence, political influence;
10. Cost-effectiveness – assessment of what burden the mentioned services place upon the budget against the value gained in return;
11. Features of direct mutual relations between citizens and institutions:
 - a. Detection of mutual feelings' perception (how citizens feel in contacts with public servants vs. how public servants feel in contacts with citizens);
 - b. Expectations (what is relevant to citizens vs. how much what matters to citizens has been accommodated);
12. Abuse – by type and degree;
13. Functioning of the system for quality assurance and control, and proceeding upon citizens' complaints.

The survey of citizens' satisfaction with three selected areas was conducted in a very comprehensive way, combining the survey of citizens' attitudes (quantitative) and citizen focus groups (qualitative). Such methodological combination used the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative methods of survey and analysis, but also examined the alignment and confronted the views of citizens to those of public servants, which significantly



reduced methodological limitations regarding public opinion polls.

Quantitative survey was conducted by applying CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) survey and it was limited to the representative sample, thus enabling the coverage of all population categories, which could have different views of satisfaction with these services (e.g. rural vs. urban population). Also, the survey was limited to three selected areas of public policies, aiming at including a certain minimal number of respondents who had had experience with the given services in the past year. The *exit-poll* survey method was designed to overcome this limitation, i.e. provide a complement to the survey with a necessary number of respondents with relevant experience and it was employed only when exploring citizens' satisfaction with the services of children's enrolment in pre-school institutions and primary schools.

For the purpose of questioning the attitudes of public servants working on service delivery in the areas subject to the analysis, two independent waves of survey were used through questionnaires filled out by the public servants. Questionnaires used in CATI survey were adjusted so that they checked the staff impressions of their work and treatment of citizens (service users) and perception of satisfaction with contacts and services delivered. The intention was to explore the views of public servants themselves regarding the user-friendliness for citizens in their respective sectors, problems and obstacles they are faced with at service delivery. The sample covered 100 questionnaires with health care professionals (medical and auxiliary staff) at primary health care centres, pre-school educators and primary school teachers respectively. Regional distribution of the sample per target groups is proportionally structured, on the basis of official statistical data on the number of health care professionals and teachers/educators per region.

In order to improve the methodological approach, the total survey applied a mixed method too, i.e. besides quantitative research/polls, it also encompassed six focus groups with citizens who had used one of the said services in the past year. Three focus groups per each area of public services were held in Belgrade and Niš respectively.

Short stories with citizens' experiences, collected via the mojauprava.rs portal, were categorised within the pre-defined analytic model, thus being analysed by applying the quantitative analysis method. Citizens' inputs were categorised according to the structure of story-collection questionnaire, i.e. by types of services they refer to, them by reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction, as well as by description of specific situation and aspects of the referred services (detailed categories presented in Table 11. *Categorisation of stories in the models for public service analysis*). Anecdotal stories of citizens collected in this way provided a better insight into citizens' experience with public administration and served as the best illustration of problems with service delivery in Serbia, identified during qualitative and quantitative surveys previously conducted within the project. Therefore, although the collected stories constitute only aspect of the comprehensive picture of citizens' satisfaction with public services in three selected areas, they indicate certain tendencies in the area of service delivery, to they were taken account at development of final recommendations for decision makers, as the best indicators of citizens' experience.



Table 11. Categorisation of stories in the models for public service analysis

	SATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC SERVICES IN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE	SATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC SERVICES OF THE POLICE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE	SATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC SERVICES OF PRE-SCHOOL INSTITUTIONS AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS
Type of service	Administrative service (transferral of medical records, GP selection, etc.)	Registration and change of address (domicile, residence, home address, etc.)	Enrolment in primary school
	Health care service (check-up, tests and diagnostics)	Issuance of documents, certificates, testimonials	Enrolment in pre-school institution
	Scheduling appointments	Vehicle registration, issuance of traffic licence	Working conditions – equipment in schools, curricula
	General answers	Weapons registration	Moving to other school, general services, teaching staff
		Reporting misdemeanours	
Satisfaction / Dissatisfaction	Effectiveness and efficiency (working hours, organisation, waiting)	Effectiveness and efficiency (working hours, organisation, waiting)	Effectiveness and efficiency (working hours, organisation, waiting)
	Staff attitudes (kindness/professionalism)	Staff attitudes (kindness/professionalism)	Staff attitudes (kindness/professionalism)
	Corruption/strings	Corruption/strings	Corruption/strings
	Working conditions (infrastructure/equipment/size of staff)	Working conditions (infrastructure/equipment/size of staff)	Working conditions (infrastructure/equipment/size of staff)
	Discrimination	Discrimination	Discrimination
	Access to information	Access to information	Access to information
	E-governance (online appointment scheduling)	E-governance (online appointment scheduling, ordering, paying)	Procedures (complications, paper work)
Your story: A short description of situation and specific aspects of service delivery	Effectiveness and efficiency (working hours, organisation, waiting)	Effectiveness and efficiency (working hours, organisation, waiting)	Effectiveness and efficiency (working hours, organisation, waiting)
	Staff attitudes (kindness/professionalism)	Staff attitudes (kindness/professionalism)	Staff attitudes (kindness/professionalism)
	Corruption/strings	Corruption/strings	Corruption/strings
	Working conditions (infrastructure/equipment/size of staff)	Working conditions (infrastructure/equipment/size of staff)	Working conditions (infrastructure/equipment/size of staff)
	Discrimination	Discrimination	Discrimination
	Access to information	Access to information	Access to information
	The work of selected doctors	Fees/service rates	Peer violence
	The work of health care professionals		Procedures (complications, paper work)
	Procedures (complications, paper work)		

CIP - Каталогизација у публикацији - Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

35(497.11)"2016/2018"

ЛАЗАРЕВИЋ, Милена, 1981-

Siva knjiga javnih usluga / autorke Milena Lazarević i Katarina Tadić.
- Beograd : Evropski pokret u Srbiji, 2018 (Beograd : Studio indizajn). -
65 str. : ilustr. ; 24 cm

Tiraž 500.

ISBN 978-86-80046-54-9

1. Тадић, Катарина, 1989- [аутор]

а) Јавна управа - Реформа - Истраживање - Србија б) Јавне услуге -
Реформа - Истраживање - Србија

COBISS.SR-ID 261886988

Partnership for Public Administration Reform and Public Services in Serbia – PARTnerships

"Partnership for Public Administration Reform and Public Services in Serbia – PARTnerships"¹ was a two-year project with the aim to contribute to public administration reform and the improvement of the public service system in Serbia. The project's overall goal was to ensure a more participatory and citizen-centric design and implementation of PAR policy and improve the responsiveness and accountability of the Serbian government for the quality of services it delivers with taxpayers' money. The project was implemented by the European Movement in Serbia (EMinS) and the European Policy Centre (CEP), with the support of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), from May 2016 till May 2018, on the territory of Serbia in cooperation with twelve local partners from different cities and municipalities: Subotica, Sremska Mitrovica, Novi Sad, Belgrade, Lazarevac, Valjevo, Zaječar, Niš, Kraljevo, Kruševac, Novi Pazar and Leskovac. The goal of the Grey Book of Public Services is to present the most important results of conducted research and to offer a specific set of recommendations for improvement of public service delivery.

