

Report on the monitoring of local administration – **The municipality of Despotovac**



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Summary

The subject of this research was a large number of areas. Out of all the areas, the situation in the area of the *Public services and human resource management* was the best rated. It was established that an appropriate institutional framework for performing tasks related to Human resource management in local administration was established, that the *Code of Conduct for officers and officials* was adopted, and that the Complaints Commission was formed. Also, the Municipality of Despotovac maintains personnel records of employees. In addition, it was established that public competitions for filling executive positions in the municipality administration were available to the public, that they were written in simple, clear and understandable language and that they did not represent an administrative burden for potential candidates. Also, in the area of *Public financial management*, especially in the part related to public procurement, as well as the degree of compliance with the budget calendar and the success of income and expenses planning, the Municipality of Despotovac showed solid results. Namely, the budget calendar is respected to great extent, the budget contains several gender-responsive goals, and expenditures are shown according to program classification, i.e. the budget is programmatic in nature, and the deviation between initially planned and realized budget revenues and expenses is acceptable. It is also positive that the Municipality of Despotovac uses the *Public procurement portal*, that public procurement procedures are carried out by a competent committee.

Unfortunately, there are also areas that are rated very poorly, so that they cannot even get a passing grade. This refers, above all, to the area of the *Strategic framework for public administration reform*, which is characterized by the complete absence of planning documents for improving the work of local self-government. The next area – *Policy development and coordination* is rated slightly better, especially considering that the work of the Municipal Council is non-transparent, that information on Council sessions is not given, the agenda, minutes of work, drafts and proposals of decisions are not published, and the Municipality of Despotovac does not show sufficient inclusivity and openness in the creation of public policy documents and regulations. In other areas, the situation could be improved if the Municipality of Despotovac, for example, made services more accessible on the eUprava portal and established a Single administrative point. The fact that the Municipality of Despotovac still has not adopted a *Local Anti-corruption Plan*, the implementation of which would increase resistance to corruption, ensure transparent work of local self-government bodies and reduce the possibility of misuse of public resources, is also incomprehensible.

Conclusions

The findings of the research showed that the Municipality of Despotovac won a total of 105 points (out of a possible 262), that is, that **the analyzed indicators in all 6 areas of public administration were met by 40.07%. Also, the overall assessment of all six analyzed areas of public administration is 2, on a six-point scale 0–5.**



Strategic framework for public administration reform

Within the first area – *Strategic framework for public administration reform*, the existence of planning documents in which the improvement of the work of municipal administration was recognized as a general or special goal was not determined. Since these documents were not adopted, that is, there is no information that they were adopted, it was not even possible to check whether civil society organizations and interested citizens were consulted in the process of their adoption, how that process went, whether there are mechanisms that would monitor the implementation of these planning documents, whether civil society organizations and are included in those mechanisms.



Policy development and coordination

Within the second area – *Policy development and coordination*, the findings show that the work of the Municipal Council is not public, that the public does not know when the sessions are held, what is on the agenda, minutes from the sessions are unavailable. In addition, the Municipality of Despotovac does not show sufficient inclusiveness and openness in the development of public policy documents and regulations.



Public services and human resource management

Within the third area – *Public services and human resource management*, the positive thing is that an appropriate institutional framework for performing tasks related to human resources management in local administration has been established, *the Code of Conduct for officers and officials* was adopted, and the Complaints Commission was formed. However, the question arises as to how well in practice the officers are protected from unwanted political interference, whether the recruitment process is transparent, and the fight against corruption is of particular concern, given that the Municipality of Despotovac is one of the few municipalities that has not even adopted a *Local Anti-Corruption Plan*.



Accountability

Within the fourth area – *Accountability*, we state that the Municipality of Despotovac has published a certain number of requested information about its work on its website (*Statute, Information sheet, Annual public procurement plan*). What spoils the impression is that valid planning documents, *the Rulebook on the systematization and organization of workplaces*, documents related to the preparation and execution of the budget are not available on the website, and there is also a lack of complete information related to the organizational units of the Municipality.



Service delivery

Within the fifth area – *Service delivery*, what is positive is that people with disabilities have access to the Municipal administration building, that there is a public policy document that deals with ensuring and increasing the quality of public services provided to citizens by local government. However, we believe that the services provided by the Municipality of Despotovac must be more accessible on the eUprava portal, and that it is necessary to establish a Single administrative point.



Public financial management

Within the sixth area – *Public financial management*, we conclude that the transparency and availability of the budget and accompanying documents is not at an enviable level, while the budget calendar is generally respected. It is also positive that the budget contains more gender-responsible goals, expenses and expenditures are shown according to program classification, i.e. the budget is programmatic in nature, and the deviation between initially planned and realized budget revenues and expenses is acceptable. Also, it is praiseworthy that the Municipality of Despotovac uses the Public procurement portal, that public procurement procedures are carried out by a competent commission, while on the other hand, the LGU website lacks information on the initiation and outcome of these procedures.



This report was prepared as part of the project **Public administration Monitoring for better local Governance – Prati JA**. The project is implemented by the **European Policy Centre (CEP)**, together with partners: the **Centre for Balanced Regional Development (CenTriR)**, the **National Coalition for Decentralization (NKD)** from Niš and the **Stanište Ecological Centre from Vršac**. The project is financed by European Union, co-financed by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue. The content of this report is entirely the responsibility of CEP, CenTriR, NKD and Staniste and not necessarily expresses the views of the European Union or the Ministry.