

Report on the monitoring of local administration – **The city of Novi Pazar**



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KOALICIJA ZA
DECENTRALIZACIJU



Summary

The website of the city of Novi Pazar is well structured. It contains a large number of easily accessible, with more than three clicks, documents, data and information. Content search function works great. There are special subdomains for the areas of public procurement, electronic services, city budget and documents on the website. The content of the website is accurate, timely and up-to-date.

The City of Novi Pazar won 143, out of a possible 262 points which makes rating 3 in the final score. The City Administration of the City of Novi Pazar achieved the best results in the areas of „Public services and human resource management“ and "Public Financial Management". Within the area of „Public services and human resource management“, the exceptional results were achieved in the fields of Institutionalization of human resource management in local administration and Effective protection of senior civil servants` positions from unwanted political interference. Within the area of "Public Financial Management", the City Administration of the city of Novi Pazar stood out in the field of the Degree of compliance with the budget calendar and successful planning of income and expenses, as well as in the field of Public procurement procedures based on the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination, proportionality and transparency.

Weaker results were achieved in the areas of "Accountability" and "Policy development and coordination". Within the area of "Accountability", the proactivity of the local administration in publishing information on the official website was rated 2. This is due to the fact that a large number of documents and information are not available in all languages in official use. In the area of "Policy development and coordination", the Transparency of the council's work, preparation of drafts and proposals for decisions in local administration was rated 2, as well as Inclusiveness and openness of policymaking in local administration.

The worst results were achieved in the areas of "Strategic framework for public administration reform" and "Service delivery". For the availability and quality of providing administrative services to citizens, 12 out of 28 possible points were scored. For the existence of a planning document for improving the work of local administration and the involvement of civil society in the process of development and structures for monitoring and coordination 12 out of 26 points were awarded.

Conclusions

The general impression is that the website of the city of Novi Pazar is well structured, that it contains a large number of documents, data and information; that all data and information are easily available, with no more than three clicks. The page content search function works great. There are special subdomains for the areas of public procurement, electronic services, city budget, documents on the website. The content of the website is accurate, timely and up-to-date.

One specificity regarding the functioning of the City Administration of the City of Novi Pazar is related to the obligation to publish documents and information in the language of the national minority. Given that the City Administration currently does not have the organizational capacity to publish documents and information in the Bosnian language, a decision was made at the political level to publish all documents and information in the Serbian language, in the Latin alphabet.

The researcher would like to emphasize that he had extremely good and high-quality cooperation with the City Administration of the City of Novi Pazar during the conduct of the research. City administration officials were extremely cooperative and responsive. All information, data and documentation were provided to the researcher by the officials of the City Administration in a timely manner and without hesitation.



Strategic framework for public administration reform

Improving the work of the city administration was recognized at the level of a general priority goal in the Sustainable Development Plan of the City of Novi Pazar 2021–2030. Consultations with civil society and interested parties were carried out during the preparation of this planning document. Local mechanisms for the implementation and monitoring of the planning document have been formed, but they do not foresee the participation of civil society organizations. The inclusion of CSOs in local mechanisms was not carried out in the form of an open competitive procedure. With regard to the openness of the call for the inclusion of interested parties in consultations during the preparation of this planning document – the call for participation was publicly announced, and the public hearing lasted 32 days. Invitations CSO are sent via e-mail, but irregularly and untimely. Local mechanisms for the implementation and monitoring of the planning document have been formed, but they do not foresee the participation of civil society organizations. The inclusion of CSOs in local mechanisms was not carried out in the form of an open competitive procedure.



Policy development and coordination

There is a section on the website where announcements are published, that is, information about City Council's meetings. This information is readily available. Information can be reached with three clicks. Minutes from City Council's meetings are not published on the website. Drafts and proposals for decisions from Council's sessions are also not published on the JLS website. Resolutions, decisions and other acts adopted by the City Council are published on the website. There is no practice of informing the general public through summaries. Reports on the conducted public debate process on the budget are published on the website. There is no information about the consultations carried out. The city administration conducts an online survey in order to involve citizens in the budget process. The development plans are published on the website. There is no information about the conducted consultations, nor about public hearings. The city administration uses three channels of communication. Consultations in the early stages were carried out during the process of developing the Sustainable Development Plan 2021–2030. There is no information available on the consultations carried out in the early stages during the process of drafting the budget, planning documents and the general urban plan.



Public services and human resource management

Within the organizational scheme of the city administration, there is a Department for joint affairs and human resources management. Personnel records are kept and contain all the elements provided by the Law, and based on them, reports on the number and structure of employees are prepared and published.

Information about public competitions for executive positions is publicly available on the Internet presentation of the City of Novi Pazar. The ads are written in bureaucratic language. They contain all the necessary data and information prescribed by law. Advertisements are also published in the language of the national minority. Advertisements contain requirements that represent special burdens for external candidates. Candidates were not offered the choice of whether to obtain themselves the data for which official records are kept, or whether the local government body can do it. The competitions were conducted in accordance with the legal procedure.

Information about public competitions for filling the positions of civil servants is available on the website. The election procedure was conducted in accordance with the law. Information on dismissals of officials in the position is not available. The code of conduct for officers and officials has been adopted and is publicly available. An appeals commission was not formed within the City Administration of the City of Novi Pazar. The anti-corruption plan has been adopted and is publicly available. A local anti-corruption forum was formed. There is no annual report on the monitoring of LAF.



Accountability

Organizational chart of the city administration, Information sheet on the work of the city administration for 2021, Statute of the city, Rulebook on the organization and systematization of work positions, Annual public procurement plans, Valid planning documents, as well as information related to the budget (Decision on the budget, Citizen's guide, Citizen participation, Report on public discussion) are published on the website. The contact information of the organizational units is on the official website, complete and up-to-date and easily accessible, but not published in the language of the national minority (Bosnian language). The information is partially adapted to citizens. All documents are easily accessible, and follow the structure prescribed by the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance. The mentioned documents are not available in the language of national minorities.



Service delivery

There is no publicly available, adopted document that deals with increasing the quality of services delivery provided to citizens by local government. A single administrative point was established and started operating on December 31st 2021. There is no information on the level of satisfaction with the work of the Single Administrative Office. On the eAdministration portal, the services of registering a child in kindergarten and Information about the location are available. Although the Statute of the City states that in the territory of the City of Novi Pazar, the Serbian language and the Cyrillic alphabet and the Bosnian language and the Latin alphabet are in official use, in practice it is not possible to achieve access to public services in the language of the national minority. Persons with disabilities have access to facilities where administrative services are provided. The LGU website contains all the necessary and easily accessible information about services and how to provide services for citizens. The website contains all the information, it can be reached with three clicks.



Public financial management

The instructions for the preparation of the budget for 2022 and 2021 were submitted within the legal deadline. The local administrative body responsible for finances submitted the Draft Decision on the budget to the competent executive body of the local government for 2022 and 2021 within the legal deadline. The competent executive body of the local government submitted a proposal for a decision on the budget for 2022 and 2021 within the legal deadline. The city assembly made a decision on the budget within the defined period. The decision was submitted to the Ministry of Finance within the legal deadline. The decision on the budget for 2022 did not define a gender-responsive goal. According to the decision on the budget, expenses and expenditures are shown by program classification according to all 17 programs. The average degree of deviation between planned and real income is 1.82%. The average degree of deviation between planned and real expenses is 8.93%.

Decisions on the budget for 2022 and 2021 are available on the website. No Budget Implementation Report is available on the website. Decisions on the final account for 2021 and 2020 are not available on the JLS website. Budget reports for the last two fiscal years are not available on the JLS website. Reports on the use of budget reserve funds are not publicly available. The civic budget for 2022 and 2021 have been published on the website. These documents can be accessed easily, with three clicks. Budget data is available on the "Budget Plan of Cities and Municipalities" portal, as well as on the "Open Data Portal".

The city administration has adopted an internal act that more closely regulates the public procurement procedure in accordance with the Law on Public Procurement. An organizational unit was established in the City Administration whose scope of work is the implementation of public procurement. There are personnel capacities for the implementation of public procurement in accordance with the regulations. The city administration uses the public procurement portal to implement all public procurement procedures. The average number of bidders in public procurement procedures is 2.18. The share of public procurement procedures that were awarded to the only bidder who participated in the procedure is 50%. The share of public procurement procedures in which the Republic Commission for the Protection of Rights in Public Procurement Procedures issued a decision prohibiting the procedure, conclusion or execution of public procurement contracts is less than 15%. Public procurement procedures are carried out by a competent commission in accordance with the Law on Public Procurement. Information on the initiation and outcome of the public procurement procedure is available on the JLS website.



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