

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



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Summary

The analysis of public administration in the municipality of Vlasotince, lead to the following conclusions:

The public administration of Vlasotince achieved the most points in the area that monitors the Public services and Human resources management in the section on Institutionalization of Human resources management, in the area of Services delivery, specifically the Accessibility and quality of provision of administrative services to citizens and in the area of Public financial management, in the section that monitors the Degree of compliance with the budget calendar and the successful planning of income and expenses and the indicator that monitor that public procurement procedures are based on the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination, proportionality and transparency.

The fewest points were achieved in the areas of the Strategic framework for public administration reform, specifically due to the lack of improvement of public administration through strategic documents and non-inclusion of civil society in the process of drafting and structures for monitoring and coordination, in the area of Policy development and coordination, in the part that follows the Transparency of council's work and preparation of drafts and proposals for decisions in local administration and Inclusiveness and openness in policymaking in local administration, as well as areas related to the Public services and human resource management in terms of the effectiveness of measures for the promotion of integrity and prevention of corruption in local administration.

During the conduct of the research, a positive practice of the behavior of officials employed in the public administration of Vlasotince was observed, which should be highlighted. The way of communication with the research team, despite the insufficient number of employees, and the handling of Requests for access to information of public importance, both in terms of form and comprehensiveness of information, are certainly an example of good practice. Also, the new website, which contains a lot of publicly available data and services that facilitate citizens' daily access to information, are also positively evaluated elements. What is necessary to do when it comes to the content of the web-presentation of the municipality of Vlasotince, is to harmonize the content and technical standards with the Regulation on further conditions for the creation and maintenance of the web-presentation of the Authority.

Conclusions



Strategic framework for public administration reform

With the fact that the *Development Plan of the Municipality of Vlasotince 2022–2029* does not contain the improvement of the work of the municipal administration at the level of a general or special goal or measure, even in a separate document, it says that it is considered that the Municipal Administration is developed and that there is no need to put further development as a priority goal or measure. The small number of assigned points explains the situation – only in E.3 – Openness of the public call for the inclusion of interested parties in consultations during the preparation of a planning document for improving the work of the city / municipal administration, in order to enable the widest possible coverage of interested parties – 1 point was awarded. We also note the absence of cooperation with civil society on the planning and development of this planning document and communication with them and other interested parties. This is an important document related to the work of the Municipal Administration, so the inclusion of civil society organizations, citizens and other actors and constant communication with them had to be one of the mandatory steps in the preparation of the planning document.



Policy development and coordination

The development of public policies is carried out with public consultations, most often in the form of public discussions to which a section on the website is dedicated, so we can conclude that it is transparent in some way, but, in addition to accounts on social networks, only the website and public invitation are used as a channel communication. The creation of some strategic documents is transparent, some are not, there are no consultations in the early phase, so one gets the impression that only form is satisfied without content. Also, the agenda of the Municipal Council is not transparent, minutes are published are not timely. The good thing is that in the form of News, the contents are retold in a way, so citizens can follow on the page what was discussed in the previous sessions.



Public services and human resource management

The monitoring of these indicators was facilitated by the answers we received from LGU Vlasotince and the documentation received, especially for indicator 5 – Executive positions in the Municipal Administration. We received a response to the Request for access to information of public importance in the form of a Decision rejecting our request, citing the *Personal data protection act* as an explanation. Greater attention is paid to the development of human resources, so it is recognized as one of the goals in the planning document, and there is also a *Rulebook on the organization and systematization of workplaces*. The municipality does not have a Local anti-corruption plan.



Accountability

The municipal administration has published data on departments, department heads and contacts, so we get the impression that it goes out to meet the citizens. Important information and documents concerning the budget, strategic documents, public procurements are publicly available, easily accessible and written in an understandable language.



Service delivery

The analysis of the website of LGU Vlasotince, the available documents, shows that the focus of the Municipal Administration is on the services they provide to citizens, and this is proven by the fact that many elements from the indicators were available on the website. Unfortunately, for some groups of citizens, such as people with disabilities, certain services remained unavailable due to the inaccessibility of the Municipal Administration building itself.



Public financial management

It was noticed that the communication with the local administration of Vlasotince was the easiest for this strategic area, although a lot of information could be found on the website of the municipality, which shows that they are open regarding public finances and have shown exceptional cooperation and professional communication. All data were submitted in the form of a response to the Request for Access to Information of Public Importance, clearly, concretely and in a timely manner.



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