

**FIFTH MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION-MONTENEGRO
SPECIAL GROUP FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM**

Podgorica, 28 September, 2017

OPERATIONAL CONCLUSIONS

The fifth meeting of the Special Group on Public Administration Reform (PAR) took place on 28 September 2017 in Podgorica. The meeting is primarily a political dialogue between the European Commission and the Government of Montenegro that takes place on a yearly basis. The meeting was co-chaired, on the Montenegrin side, by Suzana Pribilović, Minister of Public Administration, and on the Commission side, by Thomas Hagleitner, Head of Montenegro Unit of DG Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations.

Montenegro will regularly (quarterly) report on the implementation of the following conclusions:

1. By the end of 2017 the Government of Montenegro will adopt a costed Action Plan for the period 2018-2020, for the implementation of the Public Administration Reform Strategy, and the relevant actions for 2018 will be foreseen in the (draft) national budget for 2018 and the indicative budget forecasts for 2019 & 2020.
2. By September 2018 Montenegro will establish and make functional legal solutions on strategic planning, including effective quality criteria, and to define an institution in order to ensure quality control of strategies and well as coordination between government institutions.
3. By end Q1 2018 the Government of Montenegro will develop the Government's first three-year (2018-2020) Work Programme.
4. By the end of Q2 2018 Montenegro will ensure that all draft regulations are published for public consultation accompanied by the draft RIA (regulatory impact assessment) and draft explanation of the law. In addition, by September 2018, Montenegro will identify a centre of government institution that is responsible for verifying that the requirements of public consultations have been met¹.
5. By 12 October 2017 Montenegro will provide the European Commission with the drafts of the new laws on Civil servants and state employees and on local self-government. By 20 October 2017 EC will provide its feedback on the new drafts with regard to the measures taken to implement the principles of merit based recruitment and promotion. Montenegro will present the laws for adoption by the end of 2017.

¹ i.e. in terms of timely publication of drafts for written public consultation, duly accompanied with the relevant supporting documents, publication of consultation reports and of feedback to consulted organisations and citizens.

6. Montenegro, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Public Administration respectively, will present to the PAR Council the study on managerial accountability and the study on bodies within the ministries at the latest by the end of 2017.
7. Montenegro undertakes to establish a baseline data set enumerating the total number of all the public servants and (state) employees at central and local levels covered by the optimization exercise. This baseline will be established no later than the end of October 2017. The methodology for the creation of the Plan for the Optimization of the number of employees will be established no later than the end of 2017. SIGMA will support the development of this methodology.
8. Montenegro will finalise the update of the Central Personal records (CPR) and, by the next meeting of the PAR SG, the legal framework will be drafted ensuring that the CPR is fully linked to the salary system.
9. The Commission will write to the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in the next quarter to suggest the drafting of a Montenegrin PIFC policy approach. If MoF agrees with the suggested approach it will draft this framework and provide this draft to the EC by end July 2018 , the framework it should be costed.
10. Montenegro, Ministry of Finance, in cooperation with SIGMA will develop the indicator passports for the PFM RP in order to align the monitoring framework with that of PAR, by the end of Q2 2018;
11. Montenegro will continue with activities aimed to ensure further harmonization with the International standards of the Supreme Audit Institutions, and in accordance with a proposed development strategy 2018-2023;
12. Montenegro will provide the Commission by the end of 2017 an overview of the current practice in relation to implementation of Article 23 of the SAI Law, including a summary of actions taken on cases already referred to the State prosecution service.