



## Inputs for the draft structure of the Service Delivery Regional Study

The ideas are based on the draft structure of the study as well as on the proceedings of the conference “*Public Service delivery across the Western Balkans - Initiatives and innovations towards the EU*”, held in Tirana, Albania on the 18 and 19 May 2017.

### Objective of the Regional Study

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The prime objective of the regional study would be to develop an overview and insight on public service “delivery”. The study will be comparative and explorative in nature. It will bring together interesting practices (approaches, methodologies, instruments...) from the ReSPA member countries and international experiences in order to learn from them. Besides that it will explore on the methodological side of designing, delivering and improving public services. The study will put the focus on the macro (country) and the micro (organisational) level.

In doing so, it should also be taken into account that OECD/SIGMA during 2017 is performing its assessment of *Principles of Public Administration* that includes part on the service delivery. Therefore, it provides a possibility for ReSPA to go much deeper into practical research, as well as to deliver more theoretical and assessment based study.

Regional studies carried out by the ReSPA in the past had been focused on providing an overview on how the Western Balkan countries look like when vis-a-vis with certain topics. In doing so, the inspiring cases and practices from all the countries had been identified and stressed, thus allowing seeing both the common and the different approaches taken for the same issue by different countries. Based on these country cases studies, joint recommendations had been drawn providing a generalised approach that could be used within the region, but also outside of it.

The initial ambition of the draft structure was to go further, by not only identifying and analysing current state of development of different aspects of service delivery in all Western Balkan countries, but also producing suggested role models (*e.g. life situation based service catalogue, organisation of one-stop-shops*) that could be followed in a more or less uniform way.

Although well-intended, such an approach would not only be resource intensive (*especially time and finance-wise*), but also require country willingness to follow those models once developed. Taken into account that all the countries have different cultural and institutional experiences and most of them have already moved towards implementing their own solutions, it would be highly unlikely if they would decide to change what has already been done and start following a single model.

Having this said however, lessons can be learned from different citizen/user oriented approaches to improve the overall service delivery applied in a specific context, both on macro (country) as well as on micro (organisational) level.

## Methodological considerations

Service delivery has been broadly defined by SIGMA “as all contacts with the public administration during which customers, i.e. citizens, residents and enterprises (hereafter referred to collectively as citizens) seek data, handle their affairs or pay taxes. In this context, orientation towards citizens needs to be understood as encompassing all contacts and all tasks performed by the public administration that affect citizens. This broad definition encompasses not only contacts between the public administration and customers, but also the rules regulating those contacts (i.e. the administrative procedures).”<sup>1</sup>

Managing customer satisfaction is therefore indispensable for public organisations, to see if they are doing the right things and if they are doing things right. In being a public service, this is not always the easiest thing to do, due to the nature of the “client” on the one hand and the nature of public services on the other. Citizens/customers have different faces and different roles; sometimes they are customers of service delivery and sometimes they act like citizens when paying taxes, have to obey the rules, etc. This is also translated by a difference in public and private service delivery. Moreover most public sector organisations are delivering services. Services have some clear characteristics (or sometimes a lack of them) which makes them special and not the same as products. So a clearness in terminology and concepts will be important from the very beginning.

Developing good administration requires political commitment, vision, strategy, defining of priorities and the right sequencing of actions. These needs to be translated into practice, with public services designed, delivered and constantly reviewed based on the needs of the user, rather than for the convenience of the administration. Proper policy development and monitoring mechanisms should be in place for this purpose. It is also essential for the public administration’s approach towards service delivery to be coherent, effective and efficient, as well as ensuring equal treatment. Strategic policy documents and action plans are not the goal in themselves, but rather prerequisites for providing citizens with high-quality, easily accessible services. Sound administrative procedures that are applied in practice are another essential element, but they must be accompanied by continuously improved quality of services and equal access to them.

### Service Delivery Principles

Key requirement:  
The public  
administration is  
citizen-oriented,  
the quality and  
accessibility is  
ensured



This mix of macro level elements and operational translation has resulted in the definition of 4 principles. As mentioned briefly this study intends to focus to an extent on the macro level. By analysing existing policy framework(s), studying strategic options taken in service delivery models (e.g. “electronic / mobile” and online –only- strategies, multiple service delivery models...) and exploring the citizen/user satisfaction measurement approaches used and/or promoted at general

country level ([link with principle 1](#)).

Although Principle 2 is crucial to define the attention for important key principles (such as legality, equity, equal treatment, proportionality, lawful exercise of discretion, openness and transparency,

<sup>1</sup> SIGMA (2017) , *The principles of Public Administration – 2017 edition*, p.62-63



impartiality, objectivity and due diligence ) it will not be the explicit scope of this study since a full comparative study has been executed last year<sup>2</sup>

An important part of the study however will be dedicated to principles 3 and 4. Whereas in principle 1 the overall policy related to the service delivery model will be in focus, the exact focus in this part will be micro (organisational) level. The proposed methodology would follow a “integrated service delivery cycle” or the switch from satisfaction measurement to satisfaction management.

This implies that public sector organisations evolve from a closed, self-centred service provider to an open networking organisation which the public can trust. This occurs through transparent processes and accountability; through democratic dialogue from an internal (resources and activities) focus to an external (output and outcome) focus; and from a classical-design-decision-production-evaluation cycle to an involvement of stakeholders in general, and citizens (as users) in particular at each and every stage of this cycle. Citizens/customers become co-designers, co-deciders, co-producers and co-evaluators. In the service delivery cycle the following steps could be tracked accordingly.



- Analysing and understanding of the users and their needs
- (re-) design services based upon customer needs
- Provision of E/M-services
- Monitoring and assessing processes taking into account user feedback
- Measurement of customer satisfaction
- Committing to service delivery standards

Different ways, tools and techniques in doing this are presented, illustrated and discussed in this study (explorative approach). All these steps would also be illustrated by examples (comparative approach)

### Possible structure of the Regional Study

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The structure of the regional study on service delivery could consist of the following parts (*please see the document Draft structure of service delivery study*) that would provide for attractive and practical view on service delivery.

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I. Copric and P. Kovac (2016), *Comparative Study .Legal Remedies in Administrative Procedures in Western Balkans*.

## **Introduction**

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This part of the study would set the stage explaining its objectives and ways how the study was conducted, as well as how participating governments can make use of it.

Among other things some contextual facts and figures would be provided, e.g.:

- Statistical information on the utilization levels of public services in the Western Balkan. Utilization, which is defined as the first use of a service by a consumer in a given year, is a key indicator of the extent to which citizens come in contact with the public administration. Data on utilization can be gathered from the relevant agencies and household surveys.
- Balkan Barometer study on citizens' and businesses' satisfaction with public services/administrative services/ digital services

## **Terminology**

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In order to avoid any misinterpretations it is essential that the terminology used throughout the report would be explained in the beginning as there are many terms that are used with different meaning in different countries.

The easiest example for this situation is definition and **categorization of public services** (e.g. by service provider, by life situation, by target audience). Some would say that this term is self-evident and inclusive. Some, on contrary would argue that there needs to be a more detailed split – defining public administration services, services of general public good, administrative public services, individual services and individualised services of social nature.

The same applies to defining the users of the services and their different roles as citizens, tax payers, clients, consumers, etc. Besides the semantic clarification it is interesting to see the impact on the service delivery aspects. What are for example the difference of (transactional) services and products in terms of service delivery (intangible, short term...) and different kind of users (forced users, users of choice, beneficiaries...).

## **Macro -level Service delivery approaches**

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Questions like:

- Comparative overview policy framework(s) in the WB countries
- Use of measuring overall satisfaction
- Trends in service delivery and user-focus in other countries
- Regional instrument needed?

## **Service delivery on Micro level**

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Service delivery on micro level would be analysed following to the different steps of the service delivery cycle. Each of the steps will be:

- A) Documented with a description of methodologies/ tools / approaches.
- B) Covered by a baseline status, drawn-up by the use of different methodologies/tools/approaches in the different countries.
- C) Illustrated by WB inspiring examples of organisations working with these tools/approaches and what they have learned.
- D) Completed by international inspiring examples showing the use of the tools and approaches.



	Methodologies / tools / approaches	WB baseline status	WB inspiring examples	International inspiring examples
Analysing and understanding of the users and their needs				
(re-) design services based upon customer needs				
Provision of E/M-services				
Monitoring and assessing processes taking into account user feedback				
Measurement of customer satisfaction				
Committing to service delivery standards				

Each of the countries in the Western Balkan region (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Kosovo\*<sup>3</sup>, Montenegro, Serbia) would be described according to the same methodology and structure. In this way, all countries would receive equal attention and strengths of each would be put into the spotlight.

### ***Conclusions Is there an ideal model?***

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The last part of the regional study would provide conclusions of all the material providing for a condensed view on approaching service delivery reforms. It would build on the past, present and future lessons learned from the country case studies and international best practice.

For all countries, conclusions and recommendations would be drawn. In this way users of the research would also get a set of success and failure factors to observe during the service delivery reforms. Challenges like budgeting and HR development would also be raised. This, in turn, would allow to spark discussions on what could be the next steps in terms of improving service delivery models with an aim of moving forward

If possible, this chapter would be prepared in a form of infogram<sup>4</sup> in order to provide the users of the regional study with attractive and easy to use and grasp material (preferably in a form of a poster that can be put on the wall or used as presentation material during workshops or other public events; the digital version of the study would provide for interactive embedded links could make the material truly effective and multi-purpose).

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<sup>3</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on the status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

<sup>4</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infogram>