



Work plans, reports on activities and systematization of work posts

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Introduction - main reasons for the project and a brief description of current situation

Corruption, whose scope and distribution in Serbia have been estimated as high for years, has devastating effects on economic development of society and population standard, especially on the functioning of legal state and democratic institutions.

Fight against corruption is closely connected with the organization of public authorities and their responsibility for the fulfillment of set tasks. These issues were also the subject of discussion in the recently adopted Strategy for public administration reform.

Internal organization of public authorities is regulated by laws on the systematization of work posts. Earlier studies of TS, and other available data, indicate that state authorities, public enterprises and institutions, as well as local government authorities have not assessed their needs for engagement of human resources in a unique way, and that their needs assessments have not been based on the analyses about how internal organization should be designed so that an institution could complete all its tasks arising from the laws and strategic acts. In addition, acts on systematization of work posts also have other disadvantages, in terms of professional profiles that employed officials should have and their previous work experience or specific knowledge and skills (e.g. computer literacy or foreign languages). A solution that is often chosen in this regard is the adjustment of the systematization to either existing or desired state (to justify already made decisions about who will be employed), instead of doing the opposite - employing persons with necessary qualifications. Although this topic is discussed in public, the data are usually represented concisely, without systematically collected and described information that would be eligible for the analysis. The lack of possibility to influence the reform process is primarily caused by this factor, and not just by lack of knowledge and political will.



The other area of public sector that records major problems, which reflect negatively on fight against corruption, is the issue of work responsibility that could be achieved through precise work plans and performance reports. These issues are closely connected with previously mentioned concerns, since human resource planning should also be aligned with institutional goals for a given year. Also, work reports should address, among other things, whether the existing staff fulfilled these goals.

Therefore, the aim of the project was to use selected and limited sample (10 institutions), which included several public sector institutions of same type and several types of institutions, to present relevant indicators of weakness in the development of work plans, reports on human resources activities and planning in the regulation on systematization of work posts, all with the aim of influencing the process of public administration reform and fight against corruption.

Research Findings

One of the numerous tasks in the upcoming reform of public administration in Serbia is the rearrangement of public sector institutions so that they fulfill their objectives in a best possible way. The main legal instrument in these changes will be the regulations on systematization of work posts, which should present a true picture of tasks performed within public sector organizations, the minimum number of people who can perform these tasks and the necessary required qualifications. The regulations on the systematization must be closely linked with the development of work plans and work reports of these institutions and should be applied every time it is determined that planned activities were not implemented due to poor organization.

The prerequisite for the fulfillment of this goal is the extent to which these acts can be verified. The acts and the supporting documentation must be available to public. In addition, verification should also be documented through institutional control where the approval of these regulations would not be just a matter of form or fit into existing budgetary resources, but also the matter of determining the merits of received proposals.

Although conducted on a small sample (four ministries and three sports centers, two public institution and one public utility company), this research established a number of weaknesses in the existing system.



Although there are legal mechanisms for verification of systematization merits implemented by human resources management, the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Public Administration and Local Government, which are to be applied before these systematizations are approved by the Government, these mechanisms are obviously not yet applied at the ministry level, except in terms of satisfying the required form. There is no other explanation of large differences that occur between various ministries in the description of tasks for similar positions, as well as for the differences in terms of required qualifications (eg. the profile of expertise, years of experience, specialized knowledge, etc).

A typical example can be seen in prescribed requirements in terms of knowledge of foreign languages (or the very use of this term). Using a sample of only four ministries revealed examples of three different practices – two ministries mainly require knowledge of English language, one requires "knowledge of one international language", while the fourth requires "knowledge of one foreign language".

Although many ministries record a significant understaffing of the systematized positions, the data on the extent to which this may be reflecting on the performance of their duties are not clearly communicated – neither in work reports, not in information booklets. The public data are also insufficient - only one third of the ministries publishes comprehensive information regulations.

However, there are some positive trends - computer literacy is more often a prerequisite for employment of the officials (although the required level of literacy is not clearly defined), and the differences among the requirements for similar jobs are less drastic in relation to the findings from a similar research four years ago.

The extent to which a comprehensive reform of public sector will be a difficult task is seen after the analysis of existing problems recorded among the ministries and the findings related to other types of institutions we observed.

The process of drafting the acts on systematization includes even fewer rules and control mechanisms and much smaller scope of legal obligations than in the case of national authorities. (i.e. there is no obligation for drafting the information booklets among public utility companies and institutions at local level). The situation varies from institution to institution, even among those that are working in the same sector (e.g. culture, sport). The most common problems that we identified among some of the observed institutions relate to the absence of defined requirements for educational profiles, clear establishment of a low threshold of



required experience for performing responsible work and even more frequent absence of defined requirements regarding additional skills (e.g. foreign languages and computer literacy) in places where these could be useful for work performance. On the other hand, big problem for the introduction of strict rules in human resource planning among all institutions is reflected in the instability of funding sources, that is, large dependence on transfers or other forms of external income.

Similar to national institutions¹, we have also determined that this level does not reflect solid connection between the set work plans and work reports, so it is not fully possible to examine the extent to which the plans were achieved and if not, to establish the reason for that.

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<http://njinj.transparentnost.org.rs/images/stories/materijali/inicijativeianalize/Izvestavanje%20i%20odgovornost%20kao%20mehanizam%20za%20suzbijanje%20korupcije,%20decembar%202014%20TEMPLEJT.docx>