WeBER Indicator Summary

AREA: PUBLIC SERVICE AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

MONTENEGRO

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PAR Area	Public Service and Human Resource Management	Country	MONTENEGRO
SIGMA Principle	*3: The recruitment of public servants is based on merit and equal treatment in all its phases; the criteria for demotion and termination of public servants are explicit*		

WeBER Indicator	*3PSHRM_P3_I1: Openness, transparency and fairness of recruitment into the civil service*

Indicator approach

The focus of this indicator is on the recruitment into the civil service, more specifically through the analysis of the characteristics of the public competitions, as an open and transparent recruitment method which should ensure that the best candidates get civil service jobs. The methodology is based on the combination of analysis of administrative data pertaining to public competitions for public (civil) service positions and the perceptions of the public, and the civil servants themselves.

The main sample for analysis is five most recent, completed public competitions for civil service jobs in each country for the year preceding the monitoring, from five different state administration authorities, i.e. one large ministry, one medium ministry, one small ministry and two central state administration agencies (special organizations, offices, government services, etc.). Only institutions to which civil service law applies are taken into account. Before filing requests, researchers check if the administrative bodies have had public job announcements in the previous year. In countries with decentralised systems (where requests have to be filed to individual institutions), researchers double the number of FOI requests. All elements based on the sample below refer to the same sample.

To better inform the research and particularly the narrative reports, a focus group will be held with 5-10 former candidates for civil service jobs who applied to various levels of job positions as external candidates (i.e. candidates who were not already civil servants or hired via contracts in the public administration). An interview with a representative of the central, HRM responsible institution is held, to further inform the findings.

Summary of the findings

Broad public availability of the public competitions is established through the central portal of the HRMA. Those institutions from the sample that have social media accounts (ministries), do not use them to publish public competition announcements. The language of public competition announcements is sufficiently clear, but no effort was registered to transform the legal and bureaucratic language into a simpler and citizen-friendly tone, and they do not contain job descriptions.

The structure of all public announcements is uniform, there are no variations in content or style between institutions. They do not contain job descriptions, save for the titles of the positions and departments within the institution. The requirements for the job are listed mostly clearly, as are the deadlines for submission and testing. The required documentation is listed in bullet points, while some of the items are explained in more detail bellow, and forms/templates for some of the documentation required are hyperlinked directly in the public announcement. Each vacancy announcement does contain a contain contact details of the competent official from HRMA (name, phone number, time of the day allocated for working with citizens), but it is nowhere indicated that this channel is to be used for clarifications in the recruitment process.

The analysis of the legal framework and the sample of public competition announcements shows that public competitions a number of "unreasonable" barriers for external candidates, both in the law that was applied until July 2018 and the one that is currently in force.

There is no obligation for the authorities to publish the decision (rješenje) on selection and recruitment of the candidates. There is a practice of publishing the results of the testing process and the list of candidates in

ranking order. However, due to the discretion of the head of authority to select any of the successful candidates from the list, this is not an information on who was recruited.

In general, surveyed civil servants in Montenegro have a high degree of trust in the recruitment process and perceive the recruitments into the civil service as based on merit more than their counterparts in the region. On the other hand, public opinion survey yielded different results. More than a half of surveyed civil servants (55.7%) either agreed or strongly agreed that the recruitment process is fully merit-based, grounded on assessment of qualifications and skills. The only country where this percentage is higher is Albania (63.7%), with the regional average being 36%. Almost a half of surveyed civil servants in Montenegro (45.3%) disagreed with the statement "Political or personal connections are necessary to get a civil service job in my country's administration". This is a highest percentage of trust in the integrity of the recruitment process by the civil servants in the region.

Another regional record is the staggering 69.3% of surveyed civil servants who perceive that the recruitment procedure for civil servants in ensures equal opportunity for all candidates, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or another personal trait which could be basis for unfair discrimination. On the other hand, majority of the public perceives that the public servants are not recruited through merit-based public competitions. Namely, 56% of citizens do not think that the best candidates will get the jobs, while 32.7% trust that they will, i.e. that the merit system is applied.

Specific observations

In December 2017, the Parliament of Montenegro adopted the new Law on Civil Servants and State Employees, whose implementation began on 1 July 2018. Procedures started before this date needed to adhere to the old law (adopted in 2011 and amended 5 times) until their completion. All the procedures examined under this indicator were thus conducted under the old Law on Civil Servants and State Employees.

Survey of civil servants was administered through anonymous, online questionnaire. The data collection method included CASI (computer-assisted self-interviewing). The sample was N=192. The same number of servants responded to questions from this indicator (n=192).

The public perception survey was conducted through computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI), using a three-stage random stratified sampling. N=1044, n=1044.

Indicator score	*8 (out of 36 points)*
Final indicator value	*1 (scale 0-5) [1]*
Measurement period	*Collection of data on public competitions: June – July 2018.* *Civil servants survey: 02 April - 21 May 2018, 2018.* *Public perception survey: 5 October - 30 November 2017.*

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[1] Conversion of points: 0-6 points = 0; 7-12 points = 1; 13-18 points = 2; 19-24 points =3; 25-30 points = 4; 31-36 points = 5