



METHODOLOGY FOR STUDYING THE ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION BASED ON REFLECTIVE INDICATORS AND ASSESSMENT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S CAPACITY FOR 2022

SOFIA, 2023



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Analytical document

“Methodology for studying the administrative capacity of the public administration based on reflective indicators and assessment of the administration's capacity for 2022”

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List of used abbreviations

EC	European Commission
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
IPA	Institute of Public Administration
MEI	Ministry of Economics and Industry
MES	Ministry of Education and Science
MEW	Ministry of Environment and Water
MRDPW	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works
CM	Council of Ministers
MTC	Ministry of Transport and Communication
MLSP	Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
MoF	Ministry of Finance
SEP	Socio-economic partner
PPP	Public-private partnership

Introduction

The administrative capacity of public administrations to deliver good governance has become a popular subject of research, evaluation, and training over the last 20 years and the Institute of Public Administration, established in 2000, has played no small part in this.

In 2007, the Ombudsman of the Republic of Bulgaria Ginyo Ganev initiated a discussion forum entitled: “Between Freedom and Subjugation. The Right to good governance and good administration”. In his opening remarks, he formulated six criteria for good governance and good administration as basic prerequisites for the formation of a competent and humane administration, working in the service of citizens and protecting the public interest, namely:

1. The rule of law and human rights;
2. Transparency and efficiency in the administration at all levels;
3. Accountability of state and municipal bodies;
4. Guarantees for citizen participation in decision-making;
5. Equal opportunities and inclusion;
6. A policy of consensus and balance of interests in society.¹

In 2009, the Ombudsman published a Handbook on Implementing the Principles of Good Governance aimed particularly at local authorities. It sets out twelve principles of good governance, and they are:

Principle 1. Fair elections, representativeness and public participation in elections, citizen participation in governance;

Principle 2. Administration responsiveness;

Principle 3. Efficiency and effectiveness;

Principle 4. Openness and transparency;

Principle 5. The rule of law;

Principle 6. Ethical conduct;

Principle 7. Competence and capacity;

Principle 8. Innovation and openness to change;

Principle 9. Sustainability and long-term orientation;

Principle 10. Sound financial management;

Principle 11. Human rights, cultural diversity, and social cohesion;

Principle 12. Reporting.²

¹ Ombudsman of the Republic of Bulgaria "Between Freedom and Subjugation. The right to good governance and good administration". S., 2007, <https://ombudsman.bg/bg/p/mezhdu-svobodata-i-podchinenieto-pravoto-na-140>

² Ombudsman of the Republic of Bulgaria Implementing the principles of good governance handbook. S, 2009, <https://www.ombudsman.bg/bg/p/narachnik-za-prilagane-na-printsipite-na-dobr-143>

In a 2015 study by the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) at the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria, the above 12 principles of good governance are ranked according to the number of cases in which they are included in the definitions of international good governance organizations (see Figure 1).

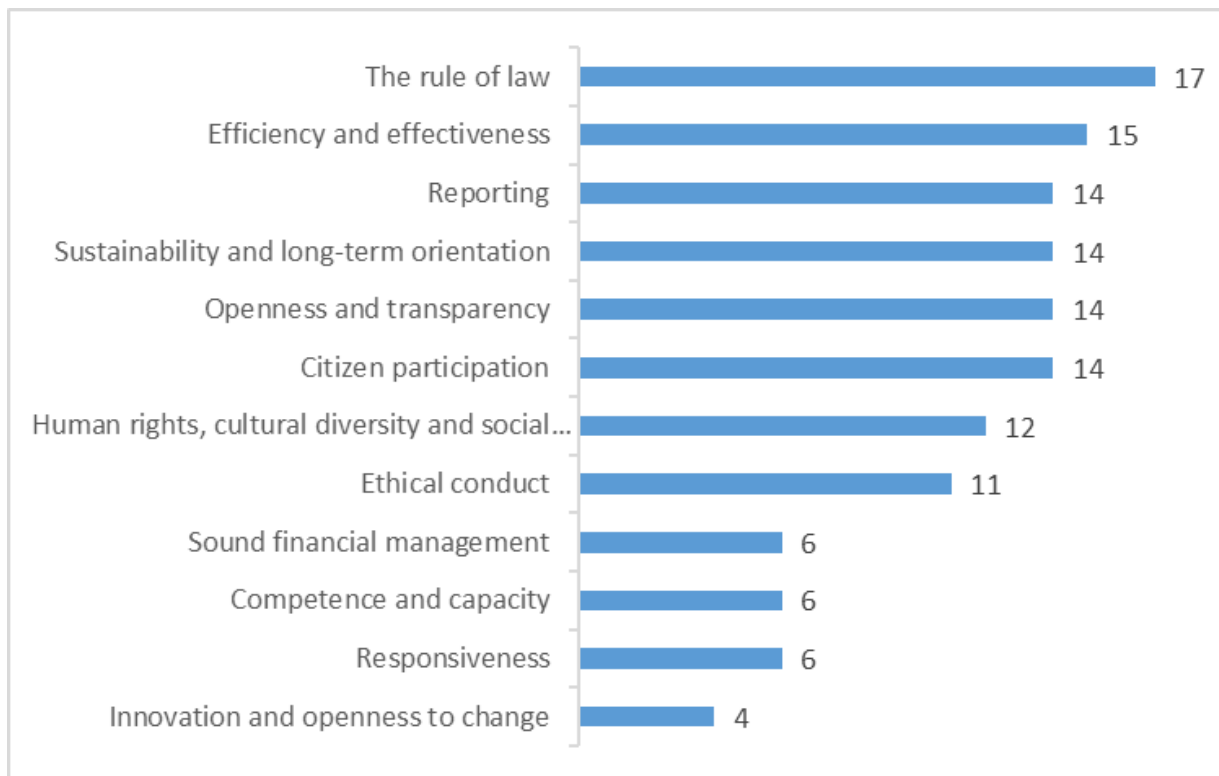


Figure 1. Ranking the principles of good governance in terms of the number of instances in which they are included in the definition of good governance by international organizations

Source: Institute of Public Administration. European practices in good governance and administration. Research 2015. S., 2015, p. 31,

https://www.ipa.government.bg/sites/default/files/european_good_practices.pdf

The same study also states that: “Despite the widely defined concept of good governance in international practice, the principles that characterize it are formulated mainly at a conceptual level and do not refer to specific and measurable indicators. The only institutions that have developed a comprehensive system of indicators to measure the practice of good governance are the World Bank and the EC. Other international organizations generally address the issue of measurability with a methodology for calculating specific indicators that can provide information on individual aspects of good governance. Therefore, the comprehensive approach to defining good governance is characterized by a certain abstractness, not entirely clear specificity, and distance from the language of the average citizen. This abstractness can only be overcome by the existence of criteria and



standards through which the adherence to the principles of good governance can be measured and traced".³

Driven by the desire to address the need to establish measurable criteria and standards for assessing the administrative capacity of public administration to deliver good governance, Prof. Borislav Borisov published a methodology for evaluating administration capacity in 2018 and made the first study of its kind covering all its hierarchical levels.⁴ Over the next four years, this survey has been conducted annually, which allows us to track the dynamics of administrative capacity indicators and to calculate an integral indicator - the Index of Administrative Capacity of the Public Administration in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The peculiarities of the methodology applied in the research of Prof. Borisov consist of the fact that the administrative capacity is evaluated based on the assessment of the state of various elements that form the administration's capacities for it to be able to successfully carry out its good governance functions. In the academic literature, this approach is known as formative indicator-based assessment.

Another alternative approach is to assess the **capacity of the administration based on the views of the socio-economic partners (SEPs) of the administration. This approach is popular as an assessment based on reflective indicators.** There is a logic and a role for both approaches in assessing the true state of an administration and identifying measures to improve its capacity.

Contract No. DU-GD-189 (ДУ-ГД-189) of 05.10.2022 commissioned a methodology for assessing the administrative capacity of the public administration based on reflective indicators and to conduct a first pilot study based on this methodology to provide additional insight into how stakeholders see and assess the capacity of the administrations they work with.

1. Methodology for assessing the administrative capacity of the public administration based on reflective indicators

As stated by Prof. Borisov, the administrative capacity of an administration cannot be monitored directly. Information about it can only be obtained by noting the characteristics or values of manifest (observable) factors that indicate its hypothetical or actual presence.⁵ The two possibilities of observing a latent construct such as a capacity can be depicted using the notation and terminology of statistical structural equation modeling (see Figure 2).

³Institute of Public Administration. European practices in good governance and administration. Research 2015. S., 2015, p. 7, https://www.ipa.government.bg/sites/default/files/european_good_practices.pdf

⁴Borisov, B. Methods for assessing the capacity of public administration. Yearbook of the Academy of Economics "D. A. Tsenov", Svishtov, 2018, pp. 19-78.

⁵Borisov, Administrative Capacity of Public Administration in Bulgaria. S., 2019.

The capacity in both models is indicated by the symbols (AC_f) and (AC_r). The left formative model specifies that the preceding manifest factors (X_i) are the causes of the subsequent latent construct (AC_f). For example, certain institutional arrangements, operational structures, or administrative resources can also be evaluated by a combined assessment to infer the presence of a certain level of capacity. These factors precede and jointly determine capacity.

The model on the right shows the impact of the administration's activities on the beneficiaries benefiting from its specific outcomes. For example, bureaucratic measures, behavior or performance outcomes such as observable phenomena can be assessed and collectively used to infer the existence of a certain level of capacity. Capacity is understood to precede and partially determine these behaviors or performance effects.

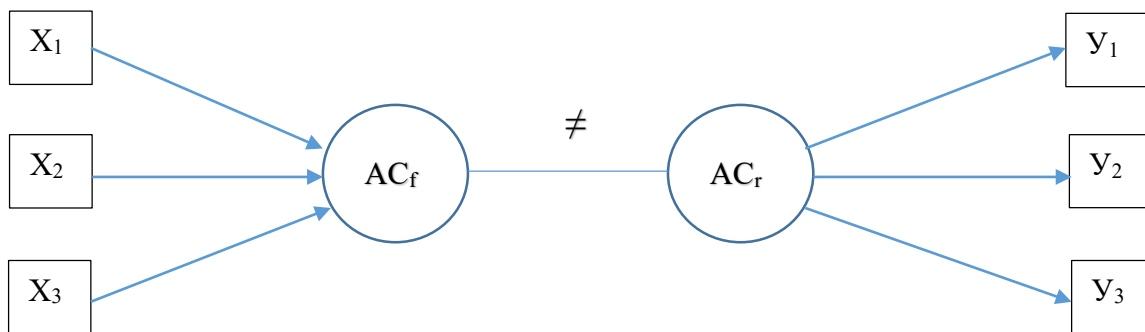


Figure 2. Administrative capacity based on formative and reflective indicators

Source: Adapted on Borisov, Administrative Capacity of Public Administration in Bulgaria. S., 2019.

The two models (left and right) can be used simultaneously by analyzing the similarities and differences between the estimates. The logic of this approach is that in one instance the evaluator seeks and assesses the state of individual capacity parameters based on regulatory requirements, strategic documents, best practices, and public expectations while in the other instance, public opinion is assessed, determined largely by subjective perceptions of its SEPs, but equally important given that **the administration is not serving itself but the public**. The outcome of the two capacity assessments would give an idea of what the administration has in mind about itself and what its SEPs believe about it. Objectifying the administration's assessment of itself depends on how capable it is of objectively assessing itself, how honest it is in presenting the reality of the situation, how familiar it is with good practice and regulatory requirements, and how committed it is to follow them. Whether socioeconomic partners' assessments are objective depends on whether they are unbiased or distorted by personal motives, political considerations, or popular opinion.

Another approach is to assess capacity using the left-side model (based on formative indicators) but adjusting for the estimates obtained using the right-side model (based on reflective indicators). Adjusting coefficients can be used to do this, but again their values will be subjectively determined by the assessors.

The project is implemented by carrying out the following **three activities** described in the table below:

Table 1. Project assignment activities

Activity	Sub activity	Description	Deadline
Activity 1. Study of the applicable legal and strategic framework regulating the activities of the public administration	Study of the legal framework regulating the activities of the central and territorial administration	A study report on the legal framework governing the central and territorial administration.	20/11/2022
	Analysis of the strategic documents for the modernization of public administration	Report on the strategic documents and their visions, priorities, objectives, and measures for the modernization of the civil service	
Activity 2. Develop a methodology for assessing the administrative capacity of the public administration based on reflective indicators	Identify the areas of administrative capacity to be explored among the stakeholders of the public administration	Develop a list of administrative capacity areas to be studied	01/12/2022
	Develop a methodology for quantifying stakeholder views	Develop a methodology for quantitative assessment of respondents' views	
Activity 3. Conduct a pilot study and report the results of the study	Pilot study on stakeholders' views on the capacity of the public administration	Questionnaire to be developed to survey stakeholders on their views on the existence of sufficient capacity of executive administrations to deliver good governance; Conduct the empirical survey; Analyze the results	10/02/2023

	Analytical paper on "Development of a methodology for studying the administrative capacity of the public administration based on reflective indicators".	Report on the results of a first pilot survey on stakeholders' views on the administrative capacity of the civil service	
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For this report, several normative and strategic documents regulating the activities of the public administration in the country were analyzed:

1. Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria
2. Administrative Procedural Code
3. Civil Procedural Code
4. Tax and Social Security Procedural Code
5. Electoral Code
6. Code of Conduct for Civil Servants
7. Social Security Code
8. Private International Law Code
9. Labor Code

Laws (in alphabetical order):

10. Law on Administrative Offenses and Penalties
11. Law on the Administrative Territorial Structure of the Republic of Bulgaria
12. Law on Administration
13. Law on Internal Audit in the Public Sector
14. Civil Registration Law
15. Law on Service Provision Activities
16. Law on Access to Public Information
17. Law on Access to Spatial Data
18. Law on State Property
19. Law on State Fees
20. Law on Civil Servants
21. Law on Electronic Communications
22. Law on e-government
23. Law on Obligations and Contracts



24. Law on the Protection and Development of Culture
25. Law on Child Protection
26. Law on the Protection of Classified Information
27. Law on Protection of Personal Data
28. Law on Consumer Protection
29. Law on Disaster Protection
30. Law on Protection against Discrimination
31. Law on Protection from Domestic Violence
32. Law on Protected Areas
33. Law on Health
34. Law on Occupational Health and Safety
35. Law on Labor Inspection
36. Law on Concessions
37. Law on Local Taxes and Fees
38. Law on Local Self-Government and Local Administration
39. Law on People's Community Centers
40. Law on Employment Promotion
41. Law on Investment Promotion
42. Law on Statutory Acts
43. Law on Public Procurement
44. Law on Municipal Property
45. Law on municipal debt
46. The Ombudsman Act
47. Law on Vocational Education and Training
48. Law on the direct participation of citizens in state power and local self-government
49. Law on Public Finance
50. Law on Regional Development
51. Law on Property
52. Law on Tourism
53. Law on Waste Management
54. Management of European Funds under the Shared Management Act
55. Law on spatial planning
56. Law on financial management and control in the public sector
57. Law on people with disabilities
58. Law on Non-Profit Legal Entities



By-laws (in alphabetical order)

59. Methodological guidelines on elements of financial management and control
60. Ordinance on the administrative register
61. Ordinance on administrative services
62. Ordinance on tenders and competitions
63. Guidelines for the implementation of risk management in public sector organizations
64. Decree No 142 of the Council of Ministers of 2019 on the development of the strategic and programming documents of the Republic of Bulgaria for the management of EU funds for the programming period 2021-2027.
65. Regulation on the entries
66. Regulations on the activities and organization of work of the National Council for People with Disabilities, the procedure for recognition of national representativeness of organizations of and for people with disabilities, and the monitoring of compliance with the criteria for national representativeness
67. Regulations for the implementation of the State Property Act
68. Regulations for the implementation of the Agricultural Land Conservation Act
69. Guidelines for Preliminary Control, MoF
70. Guidelines for the Implementation of Management Accountability in Public Sector Organizations, No. 3 MF-601/09.07.2019

Strategic program documents (ordered by their operational horizon)

71. Strategy for Building a Modern Administrative System of the Republic of Bulgaria 1998-2002
72. Concept for improving service in the context of the one-stop-shop principle 2002-2013
73. Concept for financial decentralization and Program for its implementation 2002-2005
74. e-Government Strategy 2002-2010
75. Strategy for the Modernization of Public Administration - from Accession to Integration 2002-2003
76. Strategy for the Modernization of the Civil Service 2003-2006
77. Decentralization Strategy 2006-2015
78. Operational Program "Administrative Capacity" 2007-2013
79. Decentralization Program 2010-2013
80. National Development Program: "Bulgaria 2020"
81. General Strategy for e-Government in the Republic of Bulgaria 2011-2015
82. Convergence Program of the Republic of Bulgaria 2012-2015



83. Strategy for Supporting the Development of Civil Society Organizations in the Republic of Bulgaria 2012-2015
84. e-Government Development Strategy 2014-2020
85. Strategy for the Development of Public Administration 2014-2020
86. Partnership Agreement of the Republic of Bulgaria, outlining the assistance from the European Structural and Investment Funds for the period 2014-2020.
87. Good Governance Operational Program 2014-2020
88. Strategy for the Development of Public Administration 2014-2020
89. Strategy for the Development of e-Government in the Republic of Bulgaria 2014-2020.
90. Decentralization Strategy 2016-2025
91. Strategy for the Development of Internal Control in the Public Sector of the Republic of Bulgaria 2018-2020
92. Updated Strategy for the Development of e-Government in the Republic of Bulgaria 2019-2025.
93. Partnership Agreement 2021-2027
94. Strategy for the Development of Internal Control in the Public Sector of the Republic of Bulgaria 2023-2026.

The areas of administrative capacity that were studied are:

1. Assessing the level of knowledge of the strategic documents and objectives of the administration;
2. Assessment of the participation of the SEP in the discussion of draft strategic documents of the administration;
3. An assessment of the administration's willingness to conduct ex-ante impact assessments to measure the effects of introducing new regulations and implementing policies, including tax, administrative, and regulatory burden analysis;
4. Assessing the impact of political instability in 2022 on the administration's performance;
5. An assessment of the adequacy of the Administration's response to the challenges that occurred in 2022, including in the areas of the economy, energy, health, environment, national security, etc.;
6. Assessment of the professional skills of the administration's employees;
7. Evaluation of whether the financial resources made available for the activities of the executive authority's administration correspond to the functions performed;
8. An assessment of whether the administration ensures effective control over the use of budgetary resources;
9. An assessment of how the administration prices public services, if it provides them;

10. An assessment of the public-private partnerships implemented between the administration and external contractors;
11. An assessment of the existence of and compliance with a Code of Conduct and/or a Client Charter of the administration;
12. An assessment of how open is the administration to the target groups whose interests it represents;
13. Assessment of the willingness of the executive administration to partner with other organizations, including other administrations, business and non-governmental organizations, and civil and political groups;
14. An assessment of the administration's work with advisory boards;
15. Assessment of access to public information provided by the administration;
16. Evaluation of the administration's assurance of the protection of personal data;
17. Evaluation of the implementation of anti-corruption measures in the administration;
18. Evaluation of the provision of equal opportunities for people with disabilities to the offices and services of the administration;
19. Assess the administration's responsibilities related to preventing the effects of climate change;
20. Assessment of e-government and e-services provided by the administration;
21. Respondents' interaction with the administrative authority assessment;
22. Assess collaboration with the administration in project implementation.

In these **22 domains**, **26 questions** were formulated with the possibility of four answers to each question, describing four different states of the given capacity domain, from worst to best. By indicating the description that most closely matched the actual state of the component for the organization being assessed, corresponding ratings were assigned on a Likert scale of 1 to 4. For all groups of administrations, if the average score of all administrative capacity components falls within the range of 1 to 1.75, this indicates an unsatisfactory state of administrative capacity, scores of 1.76 to 2.50 indicate a satisfactory state, scores of 2.51 to 3.25 indicate a good state, and scores of 3.26 to 4.00 indicate a very good state.

The questionnaire with questions to assess the administrative capacity of the administration of its SEPs was sent out to over 100 potential respondents resulting in 61 responses. Subsequently, 11 were eliminated because they represent deconcentrated and decentralized territorial structures of a higher administrative authority. Some of the remaining 50 respondents indicated that they perceived themselves as partners of more than one administration, for example, the local municipal administration and a ministry, resulting in capacity estimates for 85 administrative structures. The

number of respondents who completed the questionnaire with capacity assessments of different administrative bodies is presented in the following table:

Table 2. Number of respondents who rated the administrative capacity of different administration groups

Administration assessed	Number of respondents (SEP)
Ministries Group	21
Government agencies Group	2
Executive agencies Group	15
Administrative bodies established by statutory instruments which have functions in connection with the exercise of executive power and advice to the Council of Ministers Group	11
Administrative bodies established by statute and accountable to the National Assembly Group	11
Municipal administrations Group	16
Regional administrations Group	2
Territorial Specialized Administrations set up as legal entities by legislative act Group	7
Common	85

2. Empirical study of the administrative capacity of the public administration based on reflective indicators

The first four questions of the questionnaire concern official information - data about the respondent and the organization they represent. The substantive questions to assess administrative capacity are No 5 to No 30. Of these, the first two (No. 5 and No. 6) relate to knowledge of the administrative authority's strategies, plans, and programs, as well as its vision, mission, and objectives. These questions are relevant to each administration's commitment to familiarizing its stakeholders - citizens and their organizational structures - with the documents that specify the policies it will pursue in the various areas of its activity. The answers to the two questions are logically identical insofar as the vision and objectives are elements of the strategies and programs. One familiar with these documents should also be familiar with the development guidelines they contain. Nevertheless, five respondents gave radically opposite answers to the two questions. The remaining 45, however, answered similarly.

The average score for the question on whether respondents are familiar with the strategic documents (strategies, plans, and programs) of the administrative authority that define its policies in the functional areas of its competence is 3.46, while for the question on whether they are familiar with its vision, mission, strategic and operational objectives, the score is 3.28. In both cases, it is above 3.25, which indicates a good knowledge of the content of the strategic documents defining its policy in the functional areas of its competence, as seen in Figure 3. Predominating responses were that respondents were familiar with these documents from the official website of the administrative body, the media, social networks, and public discussions. A conclusion can be drawn that, in general, the executive authorities make efforts to promote their policies and achieve real results in this respect.

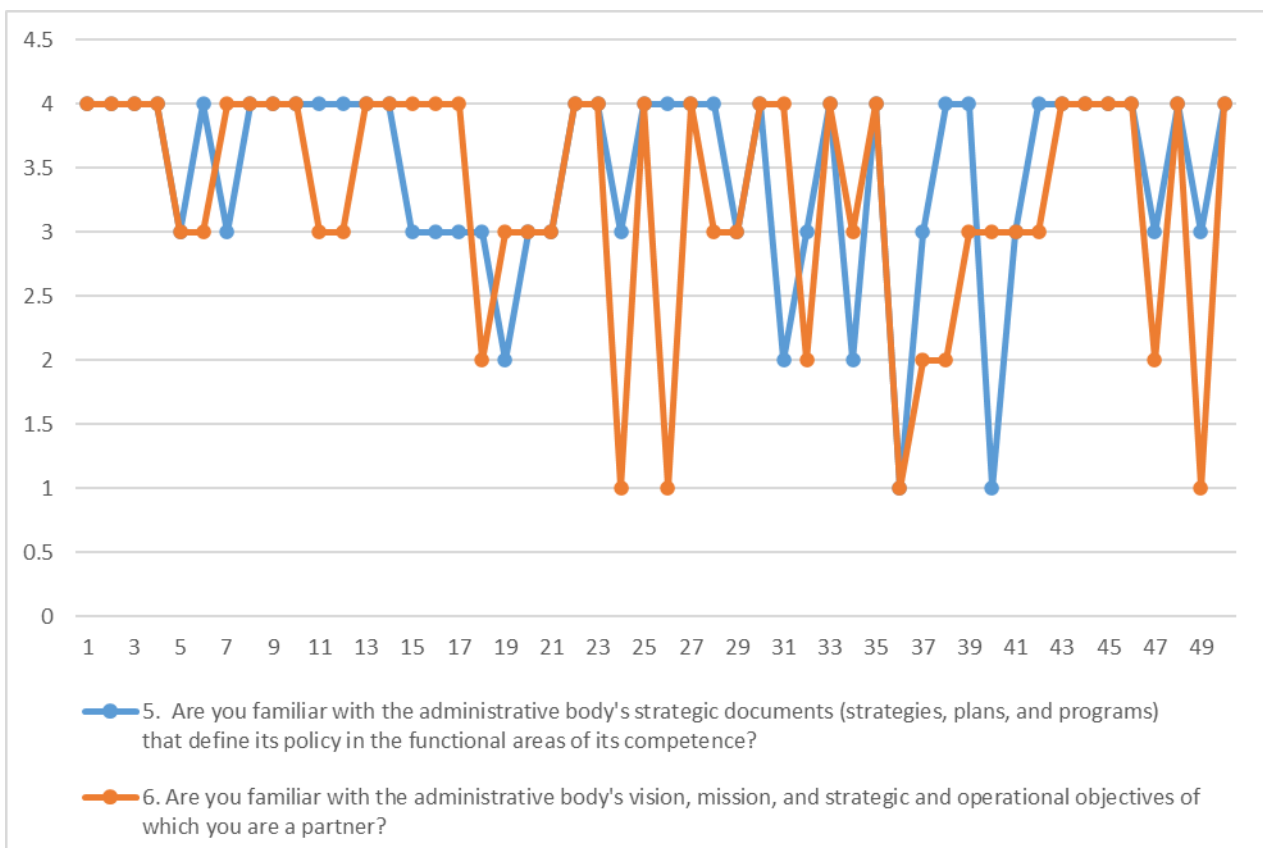


Figure 3. Assessments of the level of knowledge of the strategic documents of the administrations and their vision, mission, and objectives

The responses to the next question No. 7 - whether the partners of the executive administration believe that it is achieving its strategic and operational objectives - were less favorable. The average score here is 2.5, which falls within the range of satisfactory scores, albeit bordering on those indicating good status. The majority of respondents answered that the administrative authority achieves its objectives to a certain extent although not fully, or fails to do so within the timeframe and to the required quality. Respondents' assessments are presented in the following Figure 4. The

spread of so-called statistical dispersion, showing the difference between the highest and lowest scores, is 3, i.e. there are both highest and lowest scores on this question.

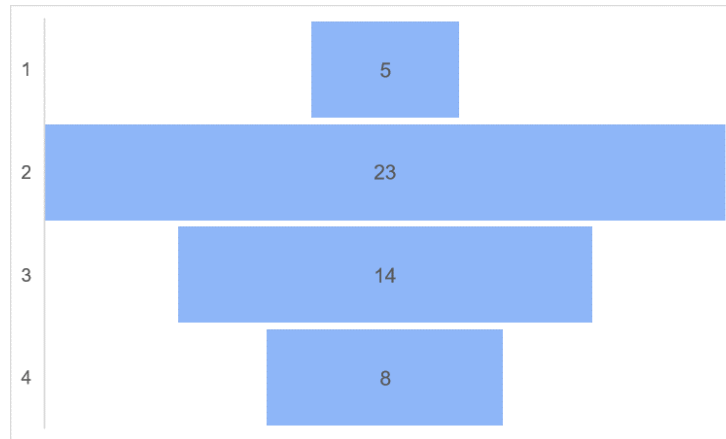


Figure 4. Assessing the question of whether the administrative body is achieving its strategic and operational objectives

With a score of 2.92, i.e. as good, respondents rated their participation in the discussion of draft strategies, plans, and programs of the administration (Question 8). The prevailing responses were that the administration's SEPs participated as stakeholders or organizations without formally expressing opinions, but did not feel that the administration was doing enough to involve all stakeholders in these discussions (see Figure 5). Involving stakeholders in the discussion of draft strategic documents is a form of direct democracy where citizens can participate in local decision-making and policy-making. As can be seen from the figure, responses to this question were highly polarized, with 26 respondents giving the maximum score of 4 and 13 - the lowest score of 1.

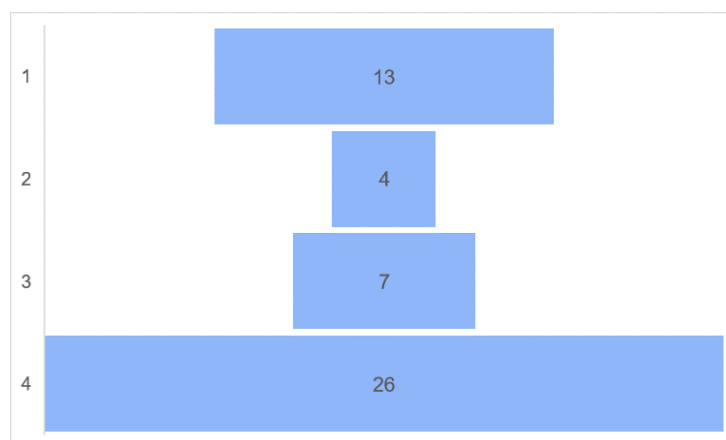


Figure 5. Evaluations of SEP participation in the discussion of draft strategies, plans, and programs of the administration

Question 9 is similar, but requires a response on whether the SEPs have participated in public consultations on the progress of local authority strategies, plans, and programs. Here the score is even lower at 2.66. Both the highest scores (19) and the lowest scores (15) are again recorded.

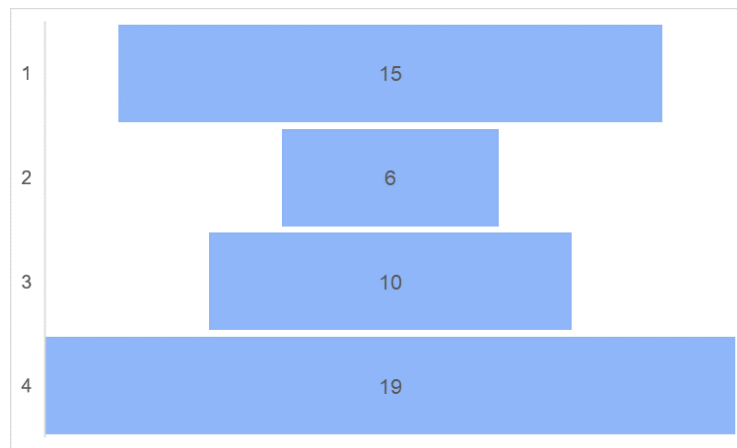


Figure 6. Evaluations of SEP participation in discussions on the implementation of the administration's strategic documents

One measure of whether an executive authority respects the interests of stakeholders who experience the results of its governance is whether the administrative body conducts impact assessments to measure the effects of introducing new regulations and implementing policies, including analyses of tax, administrative and regulatory burdens. While state taxes and fees are relatively constant, municipal taxes and fees are often changed by the decisions of municipal councils. However, these changes are rarely accompanied by economic impact studies on stakeholders. According to the respondents, impact reporting when new regulations are introduced is done through public hearings and public consultations with councils and stakeholder representatives, but not through opportunities to post comments on the official website of the administrative body. The average score is close to the limit of the values indicating satisfactory and good capacity - 2.6. The lowest and highest scorers of this element of administrative capacity are evenly split (12 each).

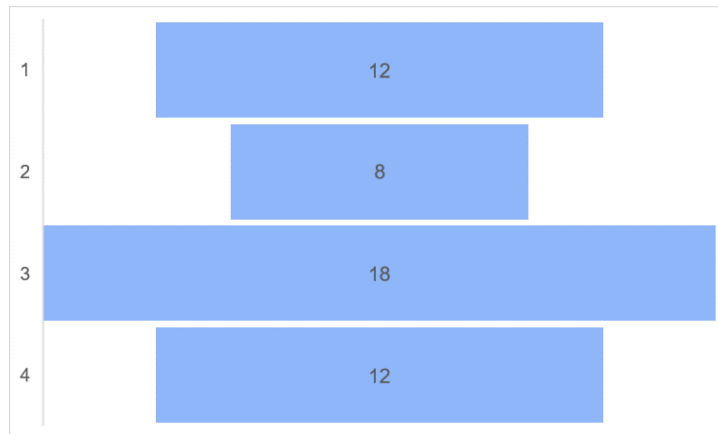


Figure 7. Assessing the issue of the administration's practice of conducting impact assessments to measure the effects of introducing new regulations and implementing policies, including analyses of tax, administrative and regulatory burdens

The following is a group of questions whose answers fall firmly within the domain of satisfactory assessment of the administration's capacity. The first requires an opinion on how political instability in 2022 has affected administration performance. The majority of respondents answered here it had been disrupted by the change in leadership style and the decline in staff motivation. The average score was 2.28.

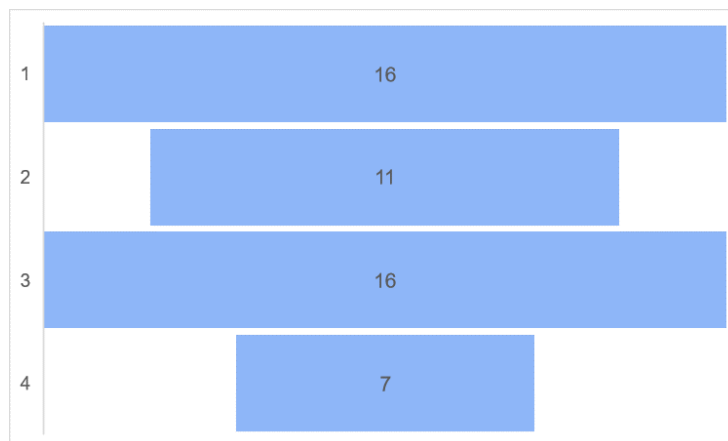


Figure 8. Assessments of the impact of political instability on the performance of the administration

The second question in this group requires an answer on whether the administration has responded adequately and promptly to the challenges that have emerged in 2022, including in the areas of the economy, energy, health, environment, national security, etc. The majority of responses indicate that the administration has sought to respond to external challenges, yet the results have not been at the level desired by the public, or that the administration has responded adequately to external

challenges but with certain delays, thus its effectiveness has not been high enough. The average score for the capacity of the administration to respond adequately to external challenges is 2.46.

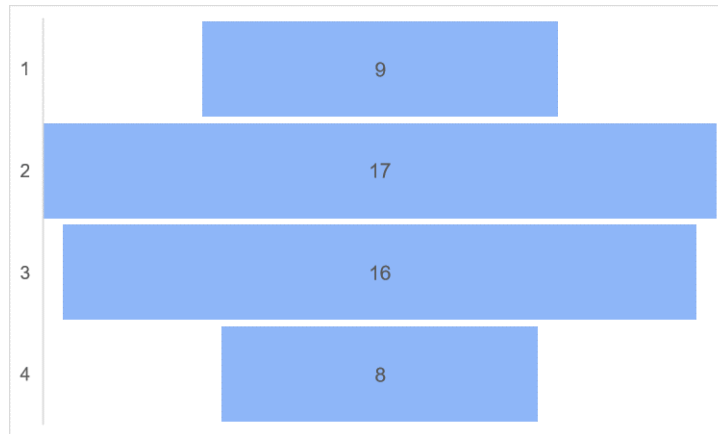


Figure 9. Assessing the capacity of the administration to respond adequately to external challenges

The professional skills of civil servants (Question 13) are also not rated very highly by the SEP respondents, who give them a below-average score of 2.3.

As to whether the number of staff in the administration corresponds to the functions they perform (Question 14), the SEPs of the administrative authorities believe that it should be updated based on administrative process re-engineering and efficiency analysis and that where the number of staff corresponds to the needs for regular work, there are still gaps due to lack of trained staff or turnover. The average score is 2.28.

It is no coincidence that the scores for these two elements of administrative capacity are so close since one of the factors for the lack of professionalism of the administrative staff is the high turnover and the lack of trained staff to join them. Another condition for increasing professionalism is that staff performance should be assessed based on operational efficiency analysis.

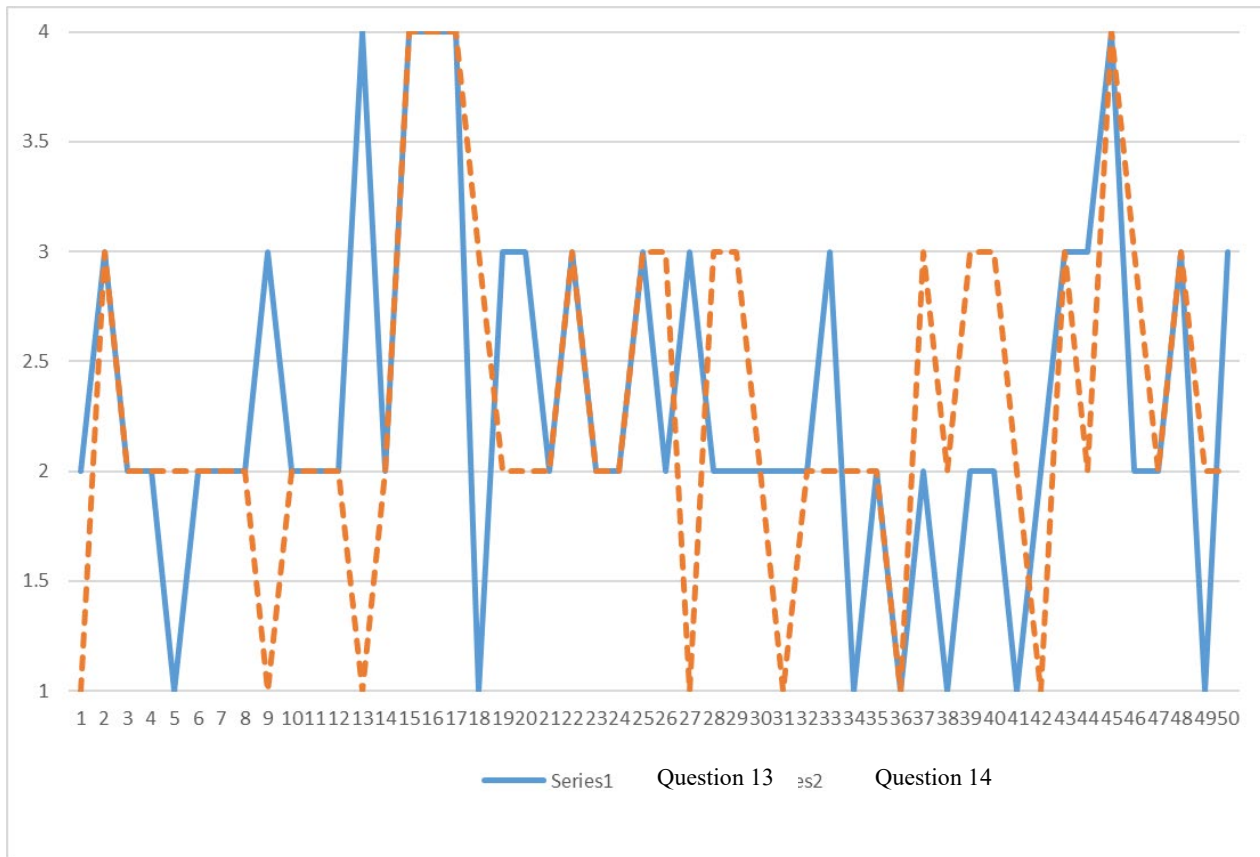


Figure 10. Assessing the professionalism of administrative staff and the adequacy of their numbers in the administrations towards work volume.

Regarding the adequacy of budgetary resources for the regular activities of the administration, opinions are almost evenly divided between the four possible answers. However, the prevailing view is that the resources are adequate to carry out the activity but are not efficiently spent. Further, it is suggested that sufficient budgetary resources are available to meet the obligations, but they cannot ensure long-term development. Investment is mainly provided by projects financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and loans. Respondents were evenly divided between the two extremes - that funds are insufficient or too much, on one hand, and that they are sufficient both to improve the quantitative and qualitative indicators that define the specific activities of the executive authority's administration and to make new investments, on the other. The mean score is also below average at 2.44.

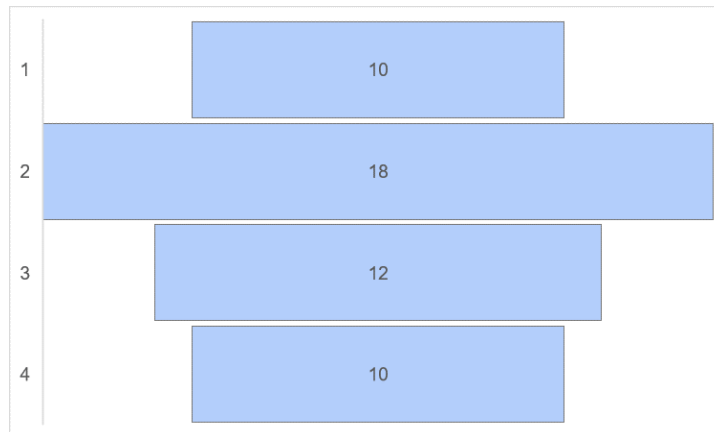


Figure 11. Evaluation of the issue of financial support for the activities of the administration

Question 16 examines whether the administration provides effective control over the expenditure of budgetary resources. Most respondents indicated that the administration has an expenditure control system and claimed that it is effective, but there is a presumption in society that inappropriate spending is allowed. This provides an average score across all responses - 2.86.

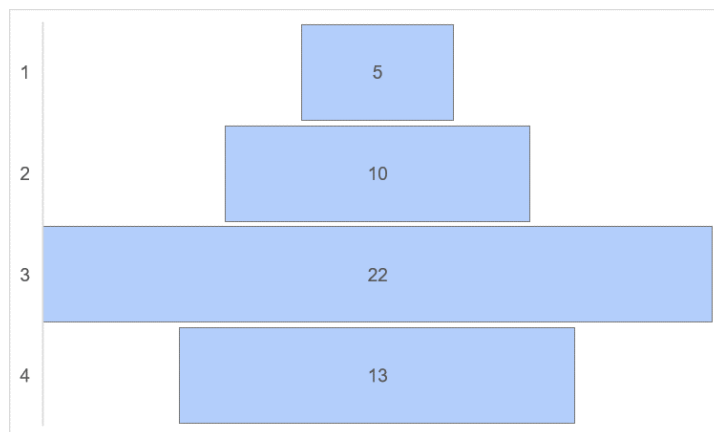


Figure 12. Assessing the question of financial control effectiveness

Slightly above average (2.64) is the assessment of whether the administration is guided by objective criteria when setting prices for public services. Half of the respondents believe this is done according to tariffs set by a legal act, which are periodically updated, but that prices do not always correspond to the actual costs of providing public services, which is a legal requirement.

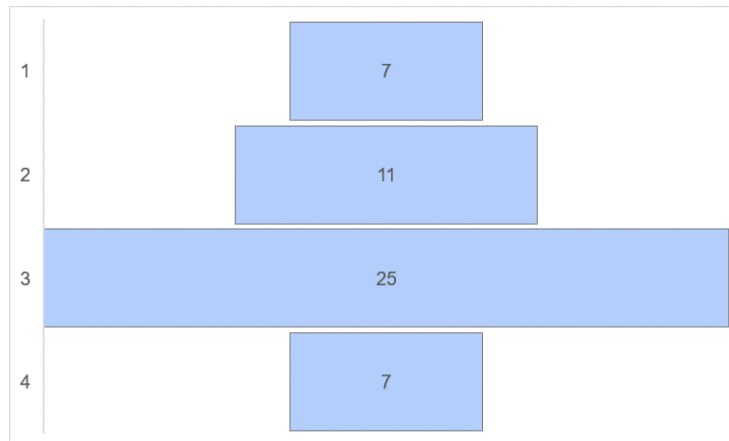


Figure 13. Assessment of the level of objectivity of administrative charges and prices for public services

The score for the willingness or ability of the administration to implement public-private partnerships (PPPs) and outsourcing is rather low at 2.16. Here, the predominant responses were that public-private partnerships are used for individual activities which the administration is responsible for, outsourced through public procurement to private organizations without insight into their effectiveness and capacity for effective control, or that PPPs are not used at all.

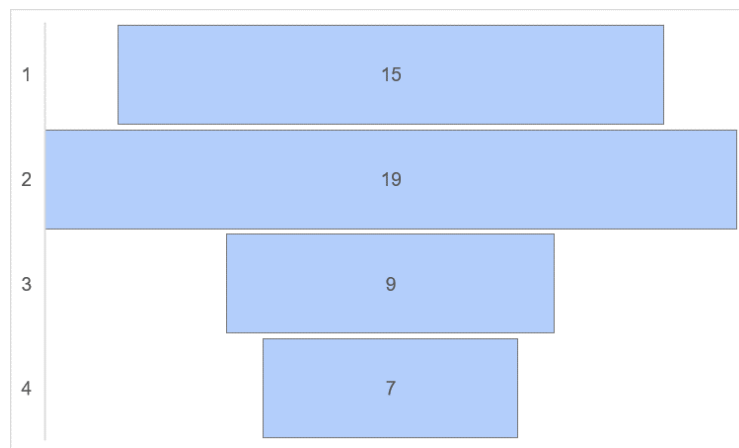


Figure 14. Assessments of the practice of administrations to implement public-private partnerships

The two following questions relate to the administration's attitude toward its output users. Most partners of the executive authorities responded to question 19 that they did not know whether the administration had adopted a Code of Ethics or a Client Charter, or they felt that even if they had adopted one, they did not comply with it. The score is 2.3. The rating for the administration's orientation towards the target groups whose interests it represents (Question 20) is also not high at 2.12 (Figure 15). The prevailing opinion is that the administration acts in a centralized manner,

following their research on the target groups they work for, assessing their needs based on judgments and perceptions, without active two-way communication with them, and without researching their opinions. Only 12 respondents answered that the administration considers the target groups' views and recommendations when making important decisions, and another 5 respondents answered that the interests, suggestions, and participation of the target groups are fully integrated into the administration's policy and practice.

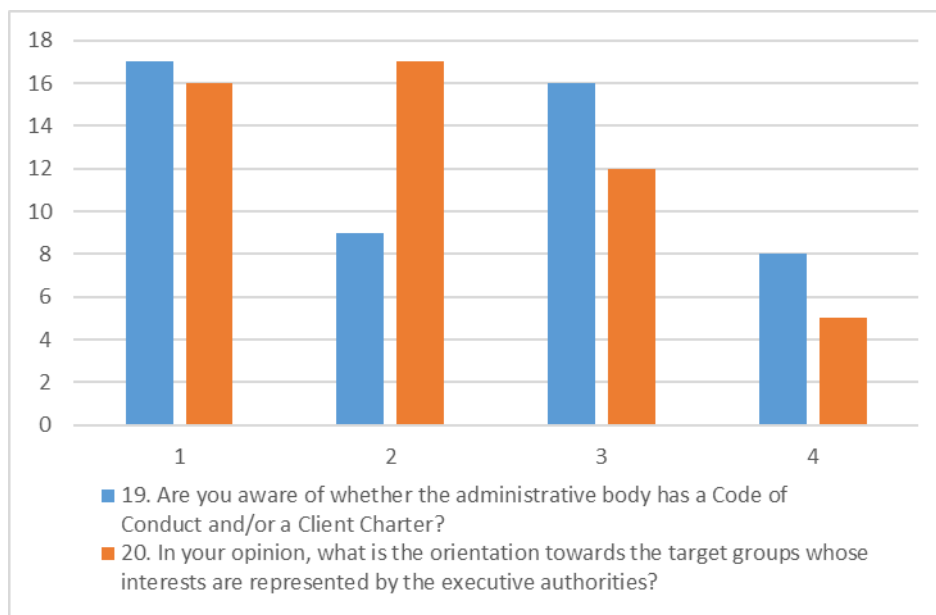


Figure 15. Assessments of the existence of a Code of Conduct and a Client Charter of the administrations and their orientation towards the target groups' needs

The next question concerns the willingness of the executive authorities' administration to partner with other organizations, including other administrations, business and non-governmental organizations, and civil and political groups. The highest number of responses (62%) indicated the administration cooperates with other organizations when there is an immediate need or a legal requirement, which scored 2. On the positive side, there are no entirely negative responses (see Figure 16). Fewer responses indicated the administration is gaining visibility and credibility but only collaborating on specific topical issues, working with various NGOs, business, civic, political, and other groups, and participating in networks and coalitions of organizations based on the target groups' needs. That is why the score here is slightly above average - 2.54.

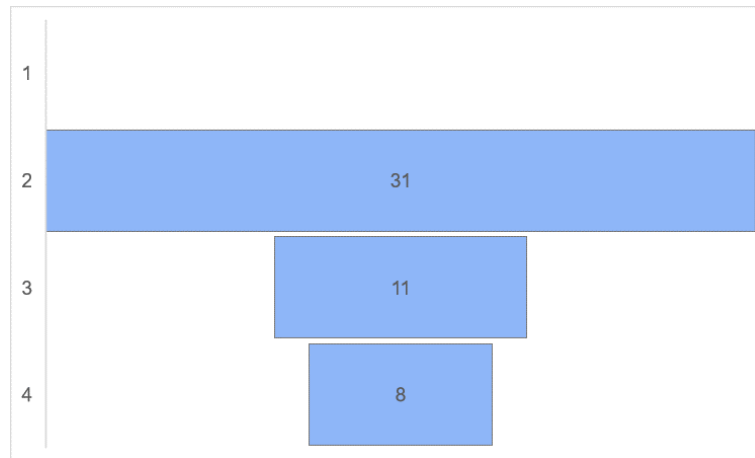


Figure 16. Assessment of the executive authority administration's attitudes toward partnership with other organizations, including other administrations, business and non-governmental organizations, civic and political groups

Question 22 explores SEPs views on the executive authority's administration interaction with advisory councils on issues of public interest. Although the average score here is close to the mean (2.68), there is a predominance of positive opinions, in the sense that the administration has set up advisory councils on various issues of public interest, and has also established regulations for the work of the advisory councils, but the interaction is insufficiently active and takes place mainly in the presence of an explicit requirement of a normative act.

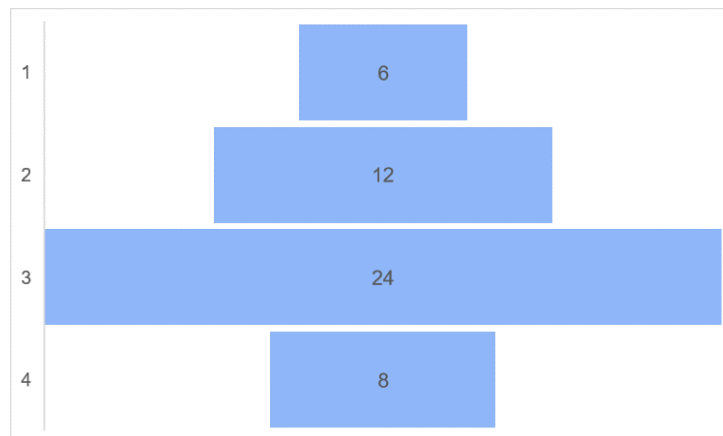


Figure 17. Distribution of responses to the question of whether the administration works with advisory boards

Ensuring access to public information is a criterion for democratic governance and transparency. When asked how the administration organizes access to public information, the predominant answers were the administration developed rules and procedures for access to

information but it's difficult for citizens to obtain such access. And the option to request access is available but only through submitting a written application form. There are also opinions the administration has developed and implemented all the necessary documents and information material to provide citizens with access to public information. Only two respondents answered that the administration has not developed rules and procedures concerning access to public information which could be explained either by referring to a specific administrative structure or by ignorance of public information access rules. The average score for this question is 2.88 (Figure 18).

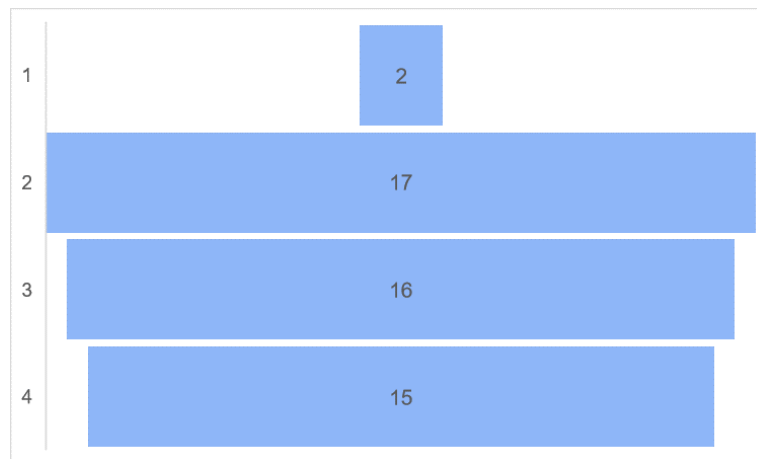


Figure 18. Assessment of the opportunities for access to public information

The next survey question asked respondents whether they believed personal data protection in the administration was at the necessary level. The prevailing opinion is the administration has well-established and implemented rules/instructions for personal data protection. At the same time, the electronic systems supporting the administration's activities are not sufficiently protected against personal data 'breaches' and 'leaks'. Score 2.74 (Figure 19).

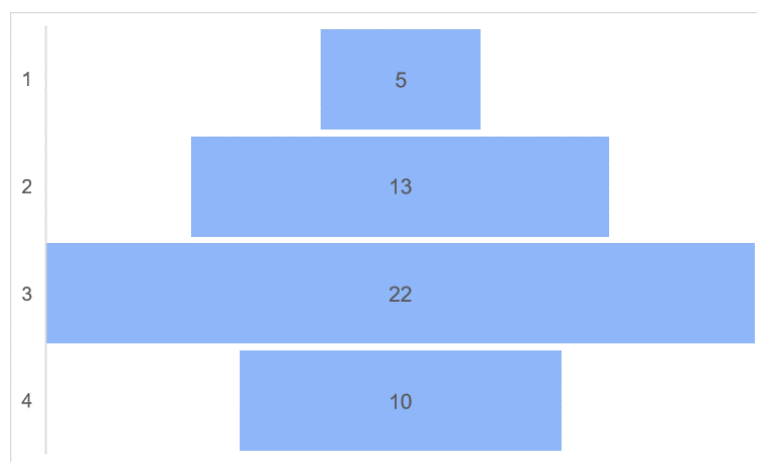


Figure 19. Personal data protection assessment

Question No. 25 examines whether the administration applies effective anti-corruption measures, with the average score of the answers being 2.22 or well below average. While most respondents believe the administration has made an effort to fight corruption and has anti-corruption measures in place, the public perception is that they are ineffective (Figure 20).

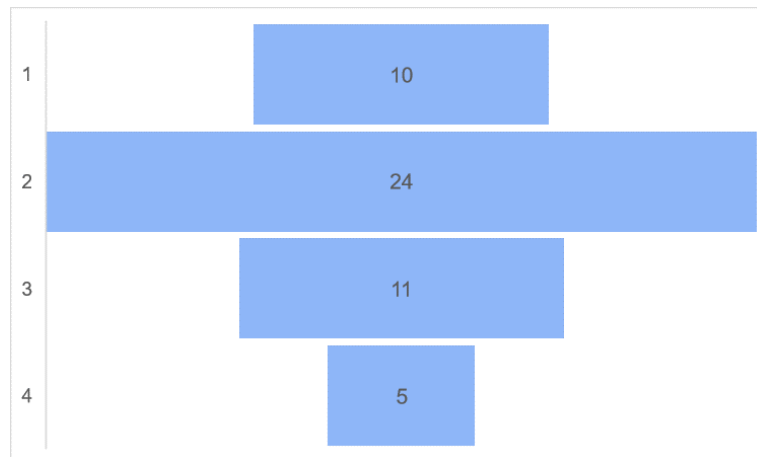


Figure 20. Evaluation of the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures

How the administration provides equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in its offices and services is a question to which 66% of respondents answered that the administration strives to provide easy and convenient access for persons with disabilities, but not everywhere due to insufficient resources. There are also answers the administration has adopted a program for working with people with disabilities, but there are no actual results of its implementation. The extreme responses - positive and negative - are few, which determines the average score for this criterion - 2.76 (Figure 21).

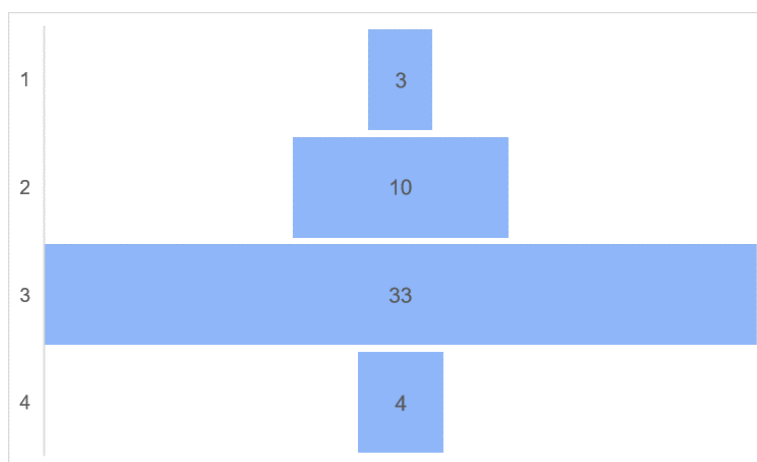


Figure 21. Assessment of equal opportunities for people with disabilities

That, unfortunately, is not the assessment of how the administration is dealing with the effects of climate change. Here, the average score is 2.30, with the majority of responses stating the administration takes into account the risks posed by climate change, leading to the occurrence of incidents such as flooding, drought, unregulated water, soil, and air pollution, etc., but does not have a program to deal with them, or that the administration has developed a program to combat climate change, takes into account the risks posed by climate change but the measures envisaged are ex-post rather than ex-ante, and provide for measures to respond to the occurrence of climate change. (see Figure 22)

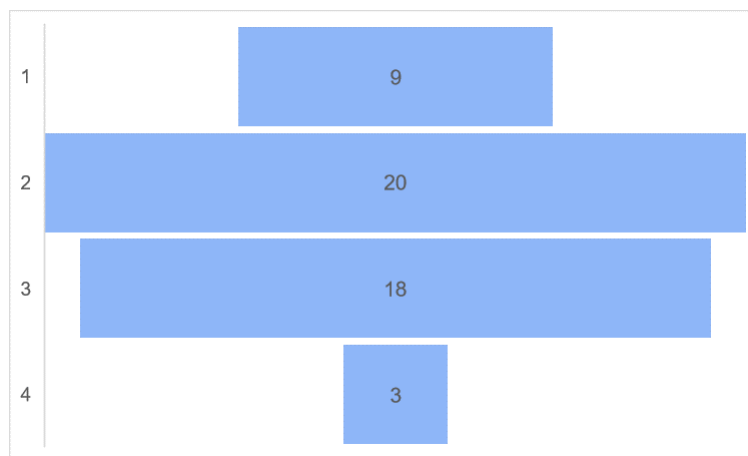


Figure 22. Assessing the capacity of the administration to tackle climate change

E-government is also rated 2.30. Responses were very polarized, with 36% responding that there is an electronic connection to the administration for submitting signals and complaints and that there is an electronic system for sending and receiving completed electronic forms about the provision of public services and complex administrative services. A further 28% believe that various software products are used, but there is no comprehensive electronic system for liaising with clients and contractors. 26% responded that e-government is at a low level, far from the modern achievements and experience of other countries, and 10% believe that signals, complaints, and applications for the provision of services are submitted electronically, the administration has its electronic platforms for internal document management, for communication with clients, citizens, and other institutions, for control, management of various work processes, etc., based on its servers or the "cloud" that the information systems of the administration are compatible with those of other institutes. That could also be explained by respondents perceiving themselves as partners of different administrative structures and, as known, different administrations are at different stages of e-government

implementation. The number of respondents who gave ratings from 1 to 4 is presented in the following figure:

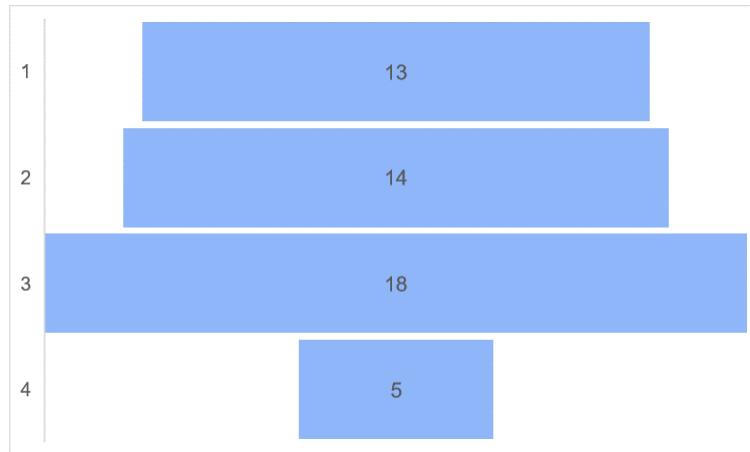


Figure 23. E-Government evaluation

The SEP's interaction with the relevant administrative authorities is rated 2.58, which is slightly above average, i.e. good. The predominant response was that the EPA maintains regular contact with the administration. They are regularly invited to discuss or present ideas and projects and have the opportunity to give their suggestions. Unfortunately, 10 respondents felt that the administration does not treat them as partners and fails to respect their ideas and recommendations.

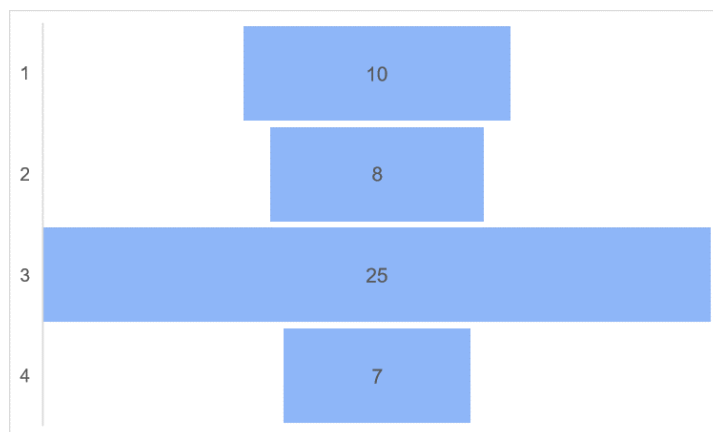


Figure 24. Evaluation of SEP's interaction with public administration bodies

The last question concerns how SEPs partner with the administration to implement joint projects. The average response score was very low at 2.16, as most respondents answered that they had not developed joint projects and were not involved in the administration's project implementation activities (40%). However, another 32% indicated that they had developed one/several joint projects

and had participated in project implementation activities of the administration. It should be noted here that joint project implementation is a two-way process and requires activity on both sides - from both the administration and the SEP. However, it is the responsibility of the administrative authority to activate its partners in this respect.

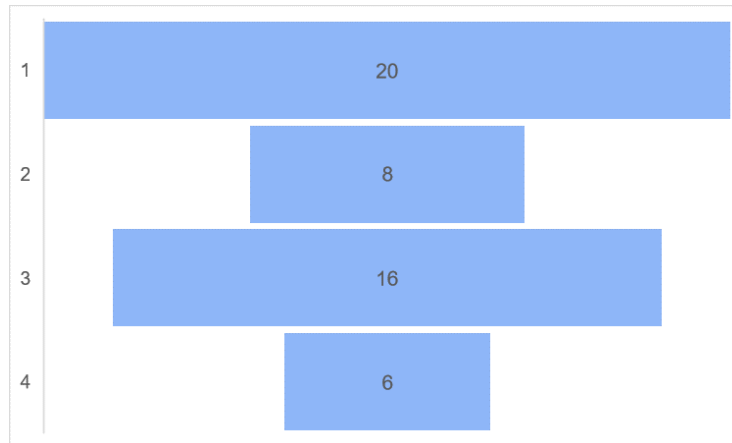


Figure 25. Evaluation of SEP and administration partnership for joint projects implementation

The overall mean scores for each of the questions 5 to 30 are presented in the following figure.

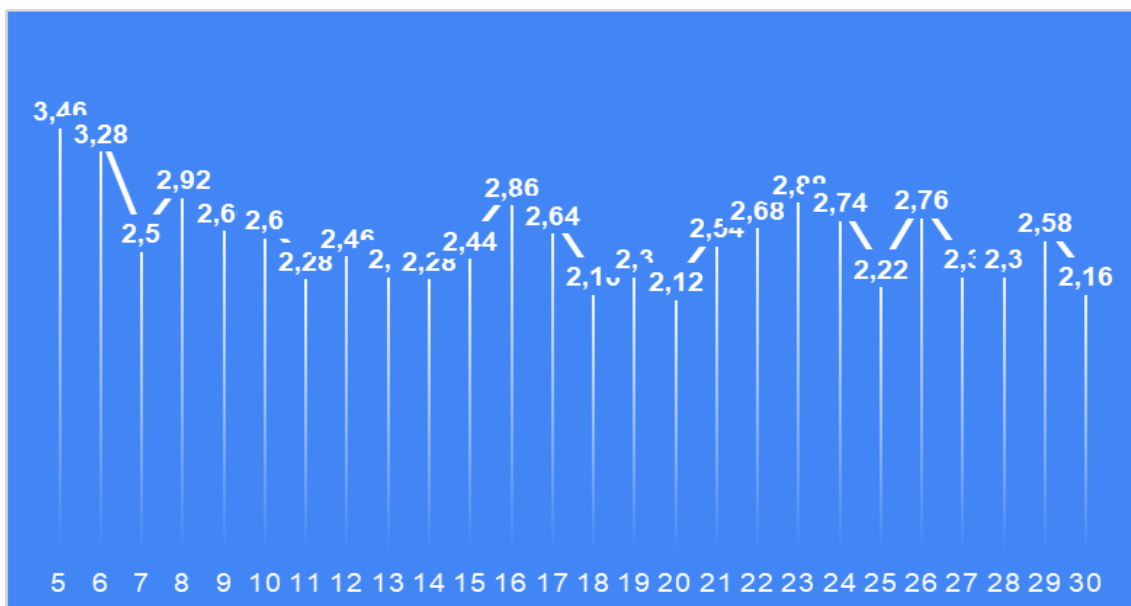


Figure 26. Average scores of respondents' answers to questions characterizing the public administration's administrative capacity

In the following figure, the ratings of the responses to the questions in the questionnaire on the administrative capacity of the public administration based on the reflective indicators are sorted in descending order.

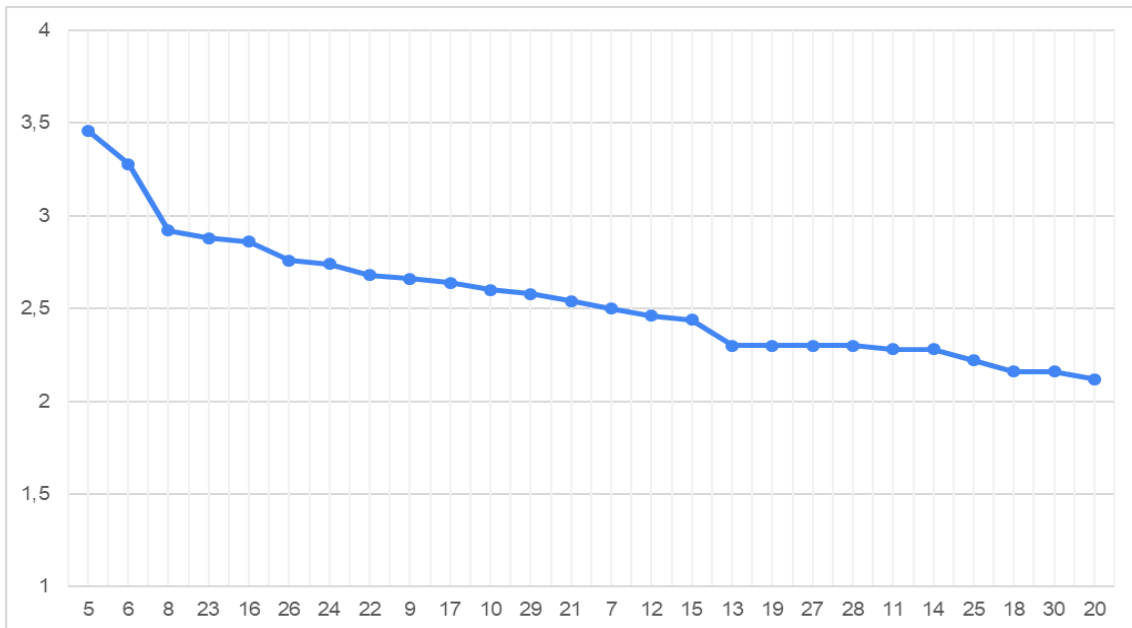


Figure 27. Sorting the questions by the ratings of the answers received

It can be seen that there are no average scores in the 3.5 to 4 range.

The answers to questions 5 and 6 on whether the SEPs are sufficiently familiar with the strategic documents governing the administration's policy in the various areas of its competence fall in the 3 to 3.5 range.

In the 2.5 to 3 range are the scores of the 11 elements of administrative capacity set out as questions in the questionnaire.

The average answers score is exactly 2.5 to one question (No. 7) whereas, in the range from 2 to 2.5 are the scores of the highest number of questions - 12.

The average response score for all 26 questions is 2.55, which indicates good administrative capacity, but bordering on satisfactory. However, this score is above the average of 2.5 and is cause for optimism if future surveys report that it is rising. Analyzing which areas of administrative capacity score low according to SEPs to make improvements is more important. It is also important to analyze which administration groups exactly the respondents were referring to when giving their ratings. Grouping them by type of administration will help us do this.

As already noted, 50 respondents rated 85 administrations. By grouping the administrative structures according to the administrative register⁶, we can see how respondents rated each group.

⁶ Administrative register. Administrative structures. https://iisda.government.bg/ras/adm_structures

3. Analysis of administrative capacity based on reflective indicators by administration groups

Grouping individual administrative structures into clusters enables the average score for each to be calculated. The first cluster is that of **ministries**. Twenty-one respondents identified themselves as partners of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, the Ministry of Environment and Water, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Ministry of Transport and Communication, and the Ministry of Economy and Industry. The average score they give these executive authorities is 2.57, or slightly above the average for all administrations, which is 2.55. The ministries' knowledge of the strategic documents is rated highest, which is also a testimonial to the fact that they have made them public and have made efforts to inform the public about the objectives and priorities set out in them. These administrative structures are considered effective in controlling expenditure, but there is a public presumption that inappropriate spending is allowed. The lowest marks are given to the fact that the ministries do not have a well-developed practice of carrying out joint projects with their SEPs, to e-government and that even if they have a Code of Conduct and a Client's Charter, most officials do not remember what it says and do not conform their behavior to established norms.

SEP's assessments of the administrative capacity of ministries, based on their responses, are presented in the following figure:

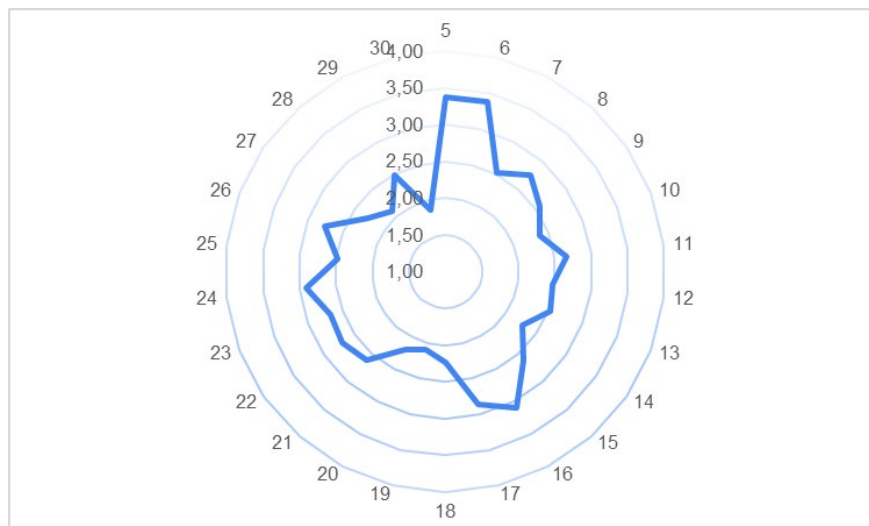


Figure 28. Ministerial administrative capacity assessments

The next cluster is of government agencies. They score 2.90 among their SEPs and rate highest on having participated in developing and reporting on the strategies, plans, and programs of these types of government entities. Low scores were given to the adequacy of the number of staff in the administrations relative to the functions they carry out, to their orientation towards target groups,

which is not based on a two-way dialog but rather on their vision, formed after research into the needs of target groups, and to e-government.

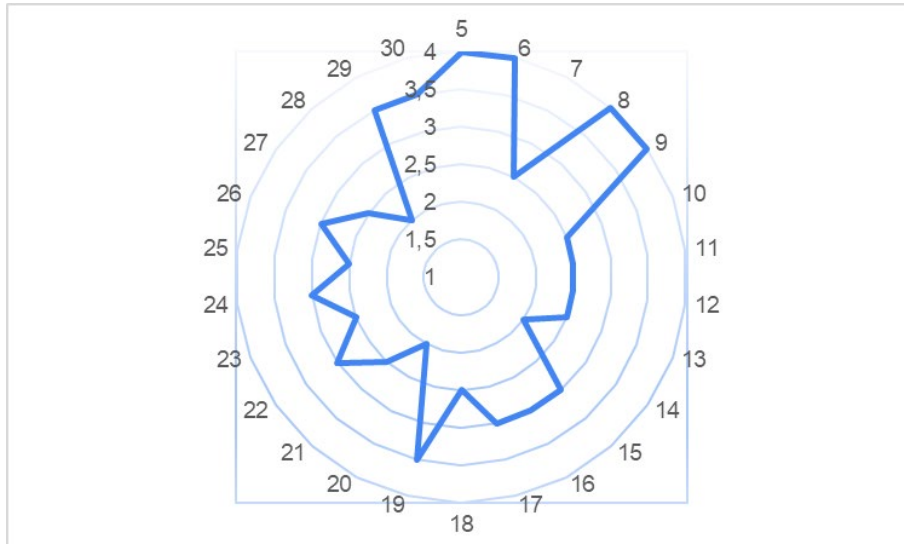


Figure 29. Capacity assessments of government agencies

The other group, **the executive agencies**, score slightly below the average or 2.48. The fact that their policies are public and understandable to the public, the personal data protection and access to information, the sufficient financial resources at their disposal, and the effectiveness of their monitoring are rated highly. Low scores were given to the implementation of PPPs, their ability to respond adequately to external challenges, the professional skills of their staff, their willingness to partner with other organizations, etc.

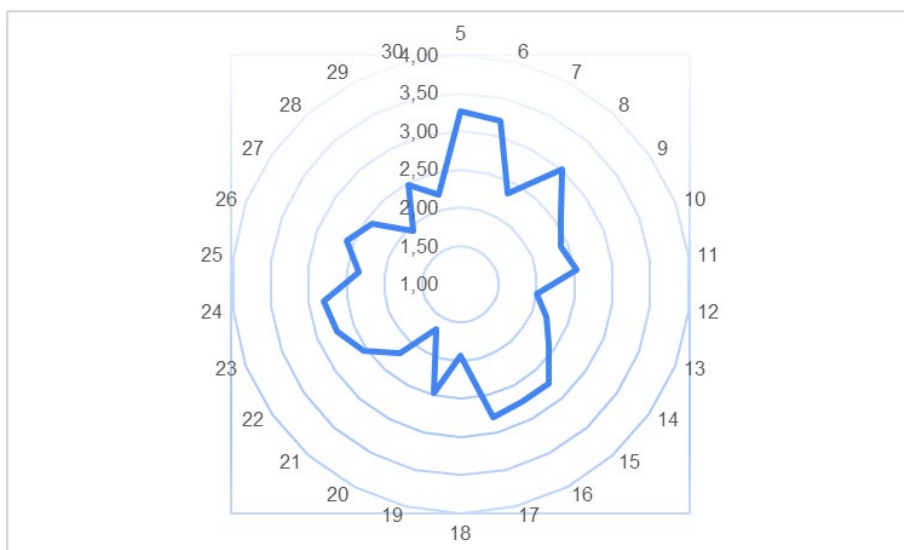


Figure 30. Capacity assessments of executive agencies

The cluster of **executive authority administrative structures, established by a specific normative act**, includes administrations with different names - commissions, offices, agencies, and inspectorates. The rating of their administrative capacity according to their SEPs is 2.56. The strengths are assessed as the transparency of their strategies, plans, and programs, how public services are priced, how government fees are set, financial control, and the work with advisory boards. Weaknesses are in the areas of e-government, orientation to the needs of target groups, response to external challenges, implementation of PPPs, the extent to which they achieve their strategic and operational objectives, compliance with ethical standards of conduct, access to public information, combating climate change and working on joint projects with other partners.

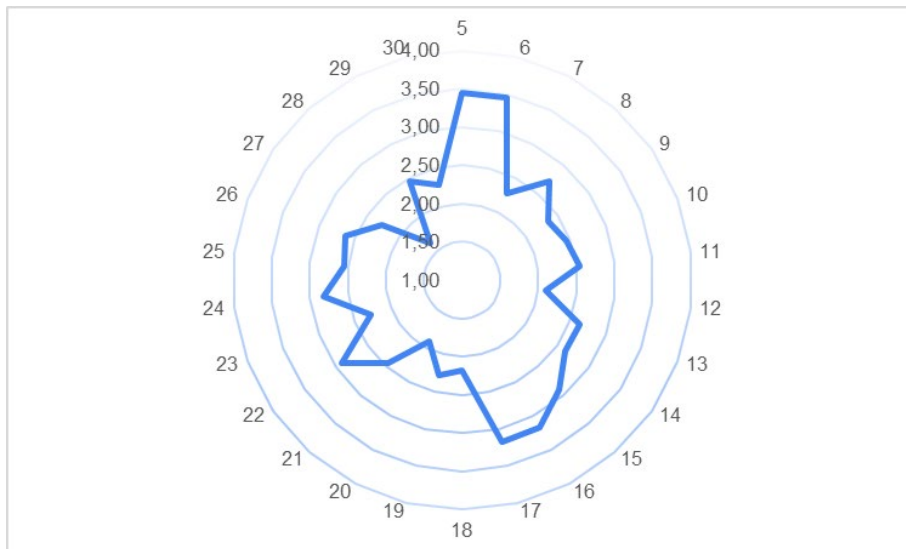


Figure 31. Capacity assessments of the executive authority's administrative structures established by a specific normative act

Similar to the group of administrative structures of the executive authority are the assessments of the **bodies reporting to the National Assembly**. This includes councils, committees, etc. Their average score is 2.54. According to their socio-economic partners, they manage their financial resources well and exercise effective financial control, the prices of the public services they provide are objective in terms of the cost of delivering them, and the number of staff they employ is more appropriate to the functions they perform. One of their weaknesses is that, although the strategic documents that govern the policies they implement are explicit, the SEPs are not involved in their development, reception, and reporting in any way. Electronic management is also cited as a weakness. Impact assessments are not carried out when new regulations are introduced, and the ethical standards set out in their codes are not respected.

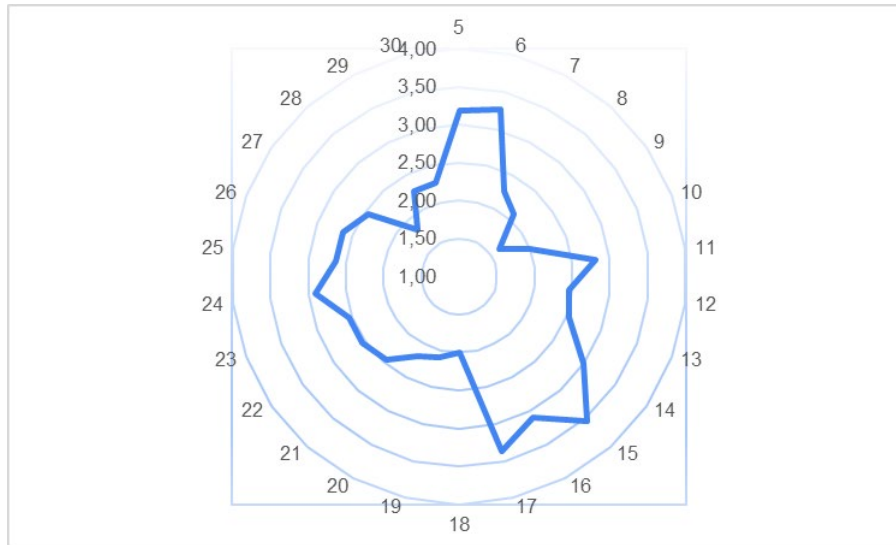


Figure 32. Capacity assessments of administrative structures reporting to the National Assembly

Municipal administrations are perceived to be closest to people's problems and are called "local government" for a reason. Therefore, the opinion of their socio-economic partners on how they perform their duties and their capacity for good governance is very important. Their knowledge of municipal strategies, plans, and programs comes partially and primarily from the municipalities' official website and other information channels, which shows that these administrations have provided the necessary publicity. The willingness of the administration to partner with other organizations, including other administrations, business and non-governmental organizations, and civic and political groups, is rated relatively highly. Local fees and public service prices are set according to tariffs established by law, which are periodically updated but do not always correspond to the actual costs of providing public services. Anti-corruption measures in municipal administrations are rated lower. It is considered that they are not sufficiently sensitive to stakeholders' concerns, that the number of staff is not optimal in terms of the functions performed, and professionalism is insufficient, and that political instability in 2022 has had a bad impact on municipal administrations performance and they are not doing enough to counter the harmful effects of climate change. This administration group did not have the lowest or highest scores, and the average score for their capacity was 2.67.

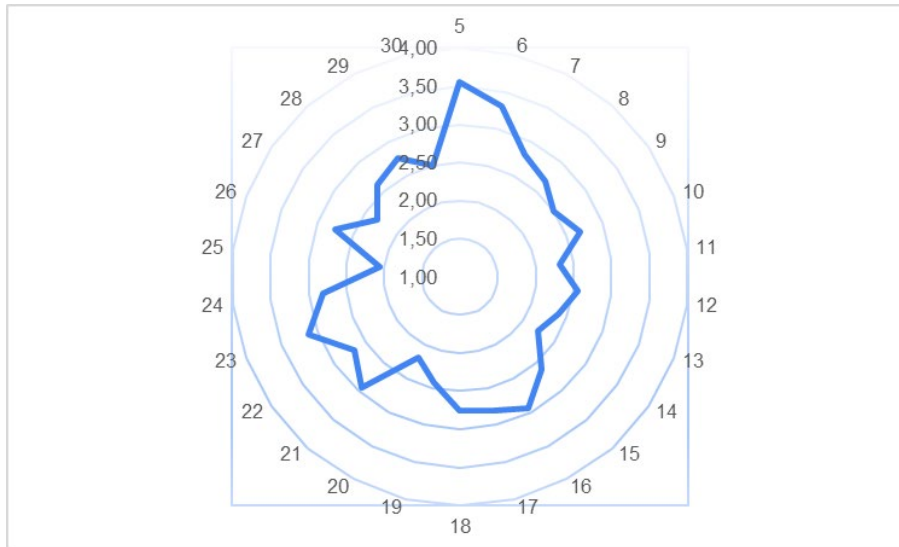


Figure 33. Capacity assessment of municipal administrations

Unlike municipal administrations, district administrations have fewer staff, and the powers of the district governor are relatively limited. However, they do have powers in terms of implementing public policy in a given district.

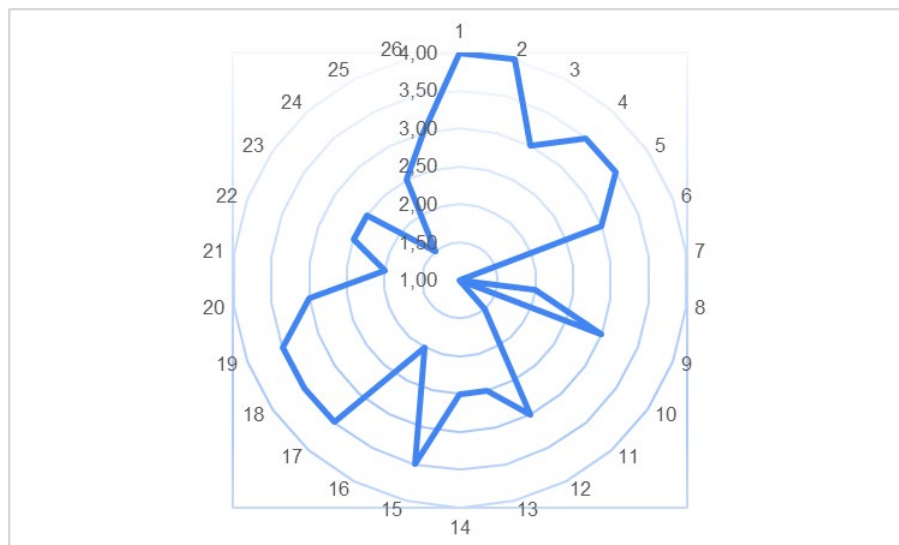


Figure 34. Capacity assessment of district administrations

Relatively high scores are given for access to public information, publicity of the regional development programs and strategies, and partnership and work with advisory councils - but interaction is still insufficiently active and occurs mainly in the presence of an explicit regulatory requirement. The lowest scores, indicating inadequate capacity, were given in the areas of the impact

of political instability, the inadequacy of the number of staff and financial resources made available for district administrations' activities, and the level of e-government. The average capacity score for district administrations is 2.71.

The last group of executive authorities is the **specialized territorial administrations**. Their average score is 2.63. The best scores are given to the publicity provided to the strategies, plans, and programs of these administrative bodies while the lowest scores are given to the dependence on political instability, the financial provision of activities and the efficiency of budget expenditure, the fight against climate change, the implementation of PPPs, the implementation of strategic and operational objectives, the fight against corruption, and the work on joint projects with the SEPs (Figure 35).

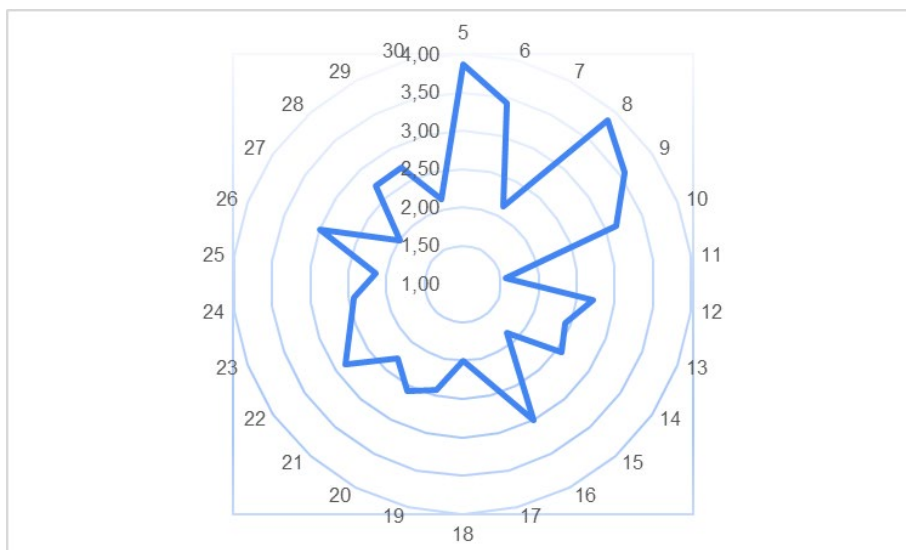


Figure 35. Capacity assessment of specialized territorial administrations

4. Conclusions

1. The survey on the public administration's administrative capacity, based on reflective indicators, shows an average capacity score of 2.55 as defined by the socio-economic partners of the administrations. Scores from 1 to 1.75 indicate an unsatisfactory state of administrative capacity, scores from 1.76 to 2.50 indicate a satisfactory state, scores from 2.51 to 3.25 indicate a good state, and scores from 3.26 to 4.00 indicate a very good state of administrative capacity. The rating of 2.55 is slightly above the average in the range of 1 to 4 and indicates good capacity.



Figure 36. Dimensions of the values determining the level of administrative capacity and the assessment obtained by the socio-economic partners of the public administration based on reflective indicators

- Administrations generally show very good capacity in terms of providing publicity for their strategic documents, which specify their development objectives and priorities, i.e. what policies they will follow. They have a good capacity in ensuring public consultation on their draft strategies, plans, and programs, access to public information, financial control, ensuring equal opportunities for people with disabilities, protection of personal data, working with advisory boards, publication and discussing of reports, ex-ante impact assessments, partnership with other institutions and interaction with their socio-economic partners. Their capacity is satisfactory in achieving identified strategic and operational objectives, responding to external challenges, the financial security of their activities, employees' professional skills, compliance with ethical standards, combating climate change, e-governance, dependence on political changes, adequacy of staffing levels to the functions performed, combating corruption, implementing public-private partnerships,

working on joint projects with SEPs, focusing their activities on the problems of the target groups they work for.

- Of all groups of administrations, state agencies have the highest scores, followed by regional and municipal administrations. Executive agencies and administrative structures reporting to the National Assembly scored the lowest.

Table 3. Average administrative capacity scores of different executive authority groups

Administration	Average score
Ministries	2.57
Government agencies	2.90
Executive Agencies	2.48
Council of Minister's Administrative structures	2.56
National Assembly's Administrative structures	2.54
Municipal administrations	2.67
Regional administrations	2.71
Specialized Territorial Administrations	2.63

- The SEPs surveyed are not unanimous in the ratings on the different elements of administrative capacity, as the convergence (coherence) of the maximum and minimum ratings varies for each group. The difference between the highest and lowest scores is called the statistical variance or spread and indicates how unanimous the SEPs were in their assessments. As can be seen from the following table, the ratings given to municipal administrations were the closest, followed by those to ministries and executive agencies, and the ratings given to district administrations and state agencies were the most varied. This is also visualized in Figure 37.

Table 4. Statistical dispersion of estimates given for different administration groups

Administration	Spread
Ministries	1.52
Government agencies	2.00
Executive Agencies	1.53
Council of Minister's Administrative structures	1.82
National Assembly's Administrative structures	1.64
Municipal administrations	1.25
Regional administrations	3.00
Specialized Territorial Administrations	1.86

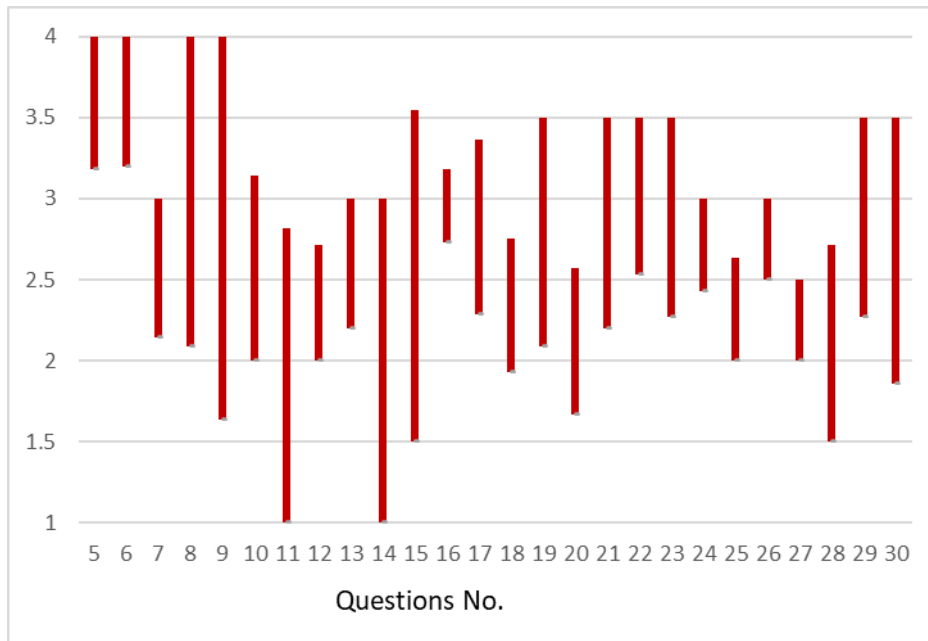


Figure 37. Maximum and minimum scores (statistical variance of scores) given by respondents through answers to the survey questions

5. Differences also exist in SEPs' opinions and their ratings on different capacity criteria. For example, the greatest differences were in the ratings given by respondents on whether they had participated in discussions on projects and reports on the implementation of the administration's strategies, plans, and programs, on the financial provision of activities, on the number of staff, on the impact of political instability on the administration's activities and joint participation in projects. The lowest differences were found in the ratings for the effectiveness of financial control, the provision of equal opportunities for people with disabilities, the capacity of the administration to tackle the effects of climate change, the system of data protection, the anti-corruption measures taken, the response to external challenges, the professionalism of staff and the dependence on political instability (Figure 38).

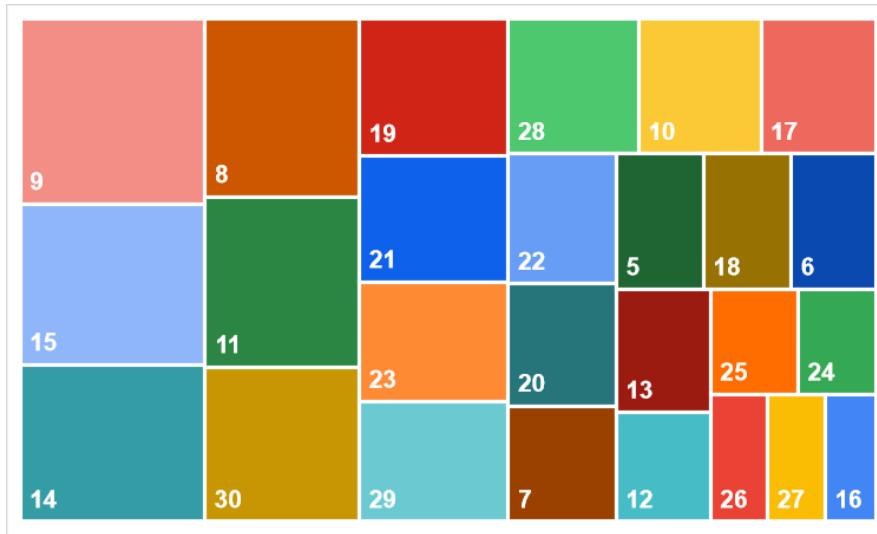


Figure 38. Variations in scores on individual questions indicating the administrative capacity level

5. Conclusion

The present methodology and the study on public administration administrative capacity based on reflective indicators is the first of its kind in Bulgaria. As such, it is not without imperfections. The methodology could be improved by including more questions, the answers to which would indicate public administration's level of administrative capacity in various aspects. To have comparability of the assessments by year, it is necessary that the majority of the questions included (80-90 percent) are identical, adding only new ones that are triggered by changes in the legal framework, strategic documents, or public attitudes and expectations towards the activity of administrations.

Respondents already familiar with the methodology and logic of the survey would be best to work with regularly so they can give their assessments each year.

The survey was designed and distributed electronically using Google Forms and data processing was done using Microsoft Excel.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Pavel Ivanov, Director of the Institute of Public Administration, for the opportunity to conduct this survey, whereby the Institute once again demonstrates its affinity for innovative research and development! Special thanks to Prof. Borislav Borisov, development mentor, for his valuable advice and guidance throughout the process of developing the methodology and the research! I would also like to thank Elena Dimkina, Training, Research, Publicity, and Communication Manager at the IPA's OMDP Directorate, who closely followed the task progress and provided assistance in all possible ways, especially with securing contacts with the socio-economic partners of the executive authorities!

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Application

A QUESTIONNAIRE TO SURVEY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PARTNERS OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ON ITS ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY IN 2022

The term "state administration", "administrative authority" or "executive authority" shall mean a ministry, a state agency, an executive agency, an administrative structure of the executive authority, an administrative structure reporting to the National Assembly, a municipal administration, a regional administration, a specialized territorial administration.

Socio-economic partners mean public councils, advisory councils, non-governmental organizations, business organizations, other public sector organizations, or users of public services.

Respondents answered the questions referring specifically to one of the administrative bodies listed.

1. Please indicate your name, surname, and family name:

*

Your answer here

2. Indicate your organization:

*

Your answer here

3. Your position/occupation in the organization:

Your answer here

4. Your e-mail address:

Your answer here

5. Are you familiar with the administrative body's strategic documents (strategies, plans, and programs) that define its policy in the functional areas of its competence? *

a. No, I don't know where to look or I'm not interested.



- b. Generally from statements by administration officials and media reports.
- c. Partially, from the official website of the administrative authority and other information channels.
- d. Yes, from the official website of the administrative body, media, social networks, and public discussions.

6. Are you familiar with the administrative body's vision, mission, and strategic and operational objectives of which you are a partner? *

- a. No.
- b. Broadly speaking, however, the administration's goals are not posted on the website and their achievement is not regularly reported to the public.
- c. Partially, from the official website of the administrative authority and other information channels.
- d. Yes, from the official website of the administrative body, media, social networks, and public discussions.

7. Do you believe the administrative body is achieving its strategic and operational objectives? *

- a. No.
- b. To a certain extent, but not completely.
- c. Yes, but not in the timeframe and quality required.
- d. Yes, completely.

8. Have you participated in draft strategies, programs, and plans discussions of the administrative body as a socio-economic partner? *

Note: If you answered "No" skip question 9.

- a. No.
- b. I've participated, but I don't think the administration is doing enough to involve all stakeholders in these discussions.
- c. Yes, as a stakeholder or organization, but without a formal opinion.
- d. Yes, as an interested person or organization, with an official statement expressing the position of the organization I represent or my position.

9. Have you participated in progress discussions on strategies, plans, and program implementation adopted by the administrative authority as a socio-economic partner?

- a. No.
- b. I've participated, but I don't think the administration is doing enough to involve all stakeholders in these discussions.
- c. Yes, as a stakeholder or organization, but without a formal position.
- d. Yes, as an interested person or organization, with an official statement expressing the position of the organization I represent or my position.

10. How, in your opinion, impact assessments are carried out to measure the effects of introducing new regulations and implementing policies, including analyses of tax, administrative and regulatory burdens? *

- a. I have not heard of such assessments being made.
- b. By organizing public hearings.
- c. By consulting public councils and stakeholder representatives, and by organizing public hearings.
- d. By consulting public councils and stakeholder representatives, organizing public hearings, and opportunities to publish comments on the official website of the administrative authority.

11. How, in your opinion, political instability in 2022 affected the administration's performance? *

- a. Administration's performance has been destabilized by frequent changes in work priorities, job insecurity for staff, and changes in members of the administration's leadership.
- b. The functioning of the administration has been disrupted by the change in leadership style and the decline in staff motivation.
- c. The administration's performance was relatively stable, but it had to change some of its priorities and working methods.
- d. No problems were felt in the work of the administration due to the lack of a regular government and a permanent National Assembly.

12. Do you believe the administration has responded adequately and promptly to 2022 challenges, including economy, energy, health, ecology, national security, etc., areas? *

- a. No.
- b. The administration sought to respond to external challenges, but the results were not at the level desired by society.
- c. The administration has responded adequately to external challenges, but with some delay, so its effectiveness has not been sufficient.
- d. The administration responded adequately and on time to external challenges and thus minimized adverse impacts.

13. How do you assess the professional skills of administrative staff? *

- a. Few administrative staff have the necessary professional skills.
- b. Most employees have the necessary qualifications, but still specific positions are not staffed with the required experts.
- c. Most staff have the necessary qualifications and external experts are brought in for specific areas where these are not available.
- d. All core areas are catered for, with members of the administration team being recognized specialists, with undisputed qualifications and experience.



14. Do you believe the number of staff in the administration corresponds to the functions they perform? *

- a. No, the number of staff does not correspond to the actual workload and needs to be increased or reduced.
- b. The number of administrative staff should be updated based on administrative process re-engineering and efficiency analysis.
- c. The number and composition of staff are in line with the needs of the administration for the smooth performance of its functions, but gaps sometimes occur due to a lack of trained staff or turnover.
- d. The number and composition of the staff correspond to the volume of work, allowing for the development and refinement of administrative functions and for interchangeability where necessary to avoid gaps in the overall skills framework.

15. Do you believe the financial resources for the Executive Administration are adequate for the functions performed? *

- a. The financial resources to carry out the activity are either not sufficient or are more than necessary.
- b. The financial means for carrying out the activity are in line with the performed functions but are not spent efficiently.
- c. Sufficient budgetary resources are available to meet the obligations but cannot ensure long-term development. Investments are mainly provided by projects financed by European Structural and Investment Funds and loans.
- d. Budgetary resources are allocated to programs and policies and are sufficient both to improve quantitative and qualitative indicators characterizing the specific activity of the executive administration and for new investments.

16. Do you believe the administration ensures effective control over the use of budget funds?*

- a. No.
- b. The administration has a cost control system but it is not effective and there is the risk of abuse.
- c. The administration has a cost control system and claims it is effective, but there is a public presumption that inappropriate spending is allowed.
- d. The administration has an effective cost control system and assures the public that budget funds are spent effectively, efficiently, lawfully, and appropriately.

17. If the Executive Authority body provides any public services, do you believe prices for those services are being set according to the actual expenditure incurred? *

- a. No.
- b. Centrally set tariffs that do not reflect actual costs.
- c. Tariffs are set by law and periodically updated but do not always correspond to the real costs of providing public services.

d. By calculating the actual costs that are regularly updated.

18. Do you know whether the administrative body applies forms of public-private partnership and activities outsourcing? *

- a. No.
- b. Yes, several activities that fall under the responsibility of the administration are outsourced through public procurement to private organizations with no insights into their efficiency and no possibilities for effective control.
- c. Yes, for a large part of non-specific activities such as cleaning, maintenance, public and service transport, etc.
- d. Yes, a variety of PPP forms are used such as management contracts, guaranteed result (ESCO) contracts, construction contracts, subsequent sites operation, public services provision contracts, etc., after carrying out costs and benefits analysis and when there is a proven economic effect.

19. Are you aware of whether the administrative body has a Code of Conduct and/or a Client Charter? *

- a. No.
- b. Yes, but most employees do not remember what is written in these documents and do not align their behavior with the established norms.
- c. There is an adopted Code of Conduct and/or Customer Charter, but there is no system for monitoring compliance with ethical norms and responding to violations, which is why violations are not identified and not reacted to.
- d. There is an adopted Code of Conduct and/or Customer Charter, and a system for monitoring compliance with ethical norms and responding to violations has been adopted. The administrative body regularly reports on violations of the norms recorded in the Code of Conduct and/or the Customer Charter.

20. In your opinion, what is the orientation towards the target groups whose interests are represented by the executive authorities? *

- a. The administration serves its target groups based on assessments and perceptions, without active two-way communication with them and without researching their opinions.
- b. The administration acts in a centralized manner, following its research of the needs of the target groups for which it works.
- c. The administration only takes into account the opinions and recommendations of the target groups it works with when making important decisions.
- d. The interests, proposals, and participation of the target groups are fully integrated into the policies and practices of the administration.

21. How do you assess the willingness of the executive authority's administration to partner with other organizations, including other administrations, business and non-governmental organizations, and civil and political groups? *

- a. The administrative unit has no experience working with other organizations. It is not known or does not have their trust.
- b. The administration cooperates with other organizations when an immediate need arises or when there is a regulatory requirement.
- c. The visibility and trust in the administration are increasing, but cooperation is only carried out on certain current issues.
- d. The administration actively works with various non-governmental, business, civil, political, and other formations, and participates in networks and coalitions of organizations based on the needs of the target groups it works for.

22. In your observation does the executive authority's administration interact with advisory councils when addressing issues of public interest? *

- a. The administration does not have a practice of interacting with advisory councils in carrying out its functions.
- b. The administration has created advisory councils on some issues of public interest but has not provided for their effective functioning through rules of procedure. Interaction with them is practically not effectively carried out.
- c. The administration has created advisory councils on various issues of public interest, and has created rules of procedure for the advisory councils, but the interaction is insufficiently active and is mainly carried out in the presence of an explicit requirement of a normative act.
- d. The administration has initiated the creation of advisory councils in various areas of its activities and has provided all necessary prerequisites for interaction with them. It is the initiator of meetings and discussions on important issues, actively working with institutionalized advisory councils from itself and other administrations.

23. Based on your experience how does the administration organize access to public information? *

- a. The administration has not developed rules and procedures related to providing access to public information.
- b. The administration has developed rules and procedures for access to public information, but citizens encounter difficulties in obtaining such information.
- c. The administration has developed and implemented rules and procedures related to providing access to public information. There is an opportunity to submit an access request, but only through a written application.

d. The administration has developed and implemented all necessary documents and information materials to ensure access to public information for citizens. There is a specific employee or unit responsible for administering the access process, and these duties are strictly included in the job descriptions of the personnel and the activity regulations of the administrative body. There is an opportunity to submit a request for access through a written application submitted on paper, through email, and oral inquiry.

24. Do you believe that personal data protection in the administration is at the necessary level? *

- a. No.
- b. The administration claims to have rules and guidelines in place for protecting personal data, but these measures may not be enforced, may not be sufficient to provide effective protection, or may not be subject to monitoring for compliance.
- c. The administration has established and enforced rules and guidelines for protecting personal data. The electronic systems used by the administration do not provide adequate protection against breaches and leaks of personal data.
- d. Effective measures are in place to protect personal data, as outlined in established rules and guidelines. A strict monitoring mechanism is in place to ensure compliance with established rules and guidelines. The electronic systems used by the administration are well-protected against personal data breaches and leaks.

25. Do you believe the administration applies effective anti-corruption measures? *

- a. No.
- b. The administration has made an effort to fight corruption and has anti-corruption measures in place, but the public perception is that they are ineffective.
- c. In addition to the national anti-corruption legislation, the administration has developed and implemented internal rules and procedures for combating corruption, but there is no information about their adequacy due to the lack of monitoring on their effectiveness.
- d. In addition to the national anti-corruption legislation, the administration has developed and implemented internal rules and procedures for combating corruption. The administration has conducted an awareness campaign and has developed and disseminated informational materials for citizens regarding the procedure for reporting and processing signals.

26. How, in your opinion, does the administration ensure equal opportunities for people with disabilities in its offices and services? *

- a. The administration does not have a special policy toward people with disabilities.
- b. The administration has a program in place for working with people with disabilities, but there are no actual results from its implementation.

- c. The administration strives to provide easy and convenient access to its services for people with disabilities, but this is not always possible due to insufficient resources.
- d. The administration has a well-defined policy for working with people with disabilities that have been coordinated with their representatives. This policy includes ensuring equal access to services, support for finding suitable employment, improving the living environment, providing medical treatment, and more.

27. How, in your opinion, is the executive administration fulfilling its responsibilities related to the effects of climate change? *

- a. The administration is not doing well with its responsibilities regarding the risks arising from climate change, leading to incidents such as floods, droughts, and unregulated pollution of water, soil, and air.
- b. The administration acknowledges the risks arising from climate change, which lead to incidents such as floods, droughts, unregulated pollution of water, soil, and air, etc., but does not have a program to deal with them.
- c. The administration has developed a program to combat climate change, acknowledging the risks arising from it, but the measures provided are more reactive (ex-post) rather than proactive (ex-ante), and they only involve responding to incidents.
- d. The administration has developed a program to combat climate change, which includes proactive measures to prevent incidents and develops environmental quality standards and risk prevention measures in the framework of its competencies.

28. At what level, in your opinion, are the e-government and e-services of the administration? *

- a. At a low level, far from the modern achievements and experiences of other countries.
- b. There is a possibility for electronic communication with the administration and for submitting signals and complaints. Different software products are used, but there is no integrated electronic system for communication with clients and contractors.
- c. There is a possibility for electronic communication with the administration and for submitting signals and complaints. There is a system for sending and receiving completed electronic forms related to providing public services and comprehensive administrative services.
- d. Signals, complaints, and service requests are submitted electronically, and the administration has its electronic platforms for internal document circulation, communication with clients, citizens, and other institutions, control, management of various work processes, etc., based on its servers or in the cloud. The information systems of the administration are compatible with those of other institutions with which it communicates and exchanges data.

29. How do you assess your interaction with the administrative body? *

- a. The administration does not treat us as partners and fails to respect our ideas and recommendations.



- b. We maintain periodic contact with the administration. Sometimes we are invited to present our ideas and projects, but without the opportunity for us to give our proposals.
- c. We maintain regular contact with the administration. We are regularly invited to discuss or be presented with their ideas and projects, and we have the opportunity to give our proposals.
- d. We maintain active contact with the administration. We participate in joint working groups, discussing current issues together. Our expertise is valued and taken into account when making decisions. We work in an atmosphere of dialog and mutual trust.

30. What is your practice with the administrative authority regarding project implementation? *

- a. We have not developed joint projects and have not participated in the activities for the implementation of projects of the administration.
- b. We have not developed joint projects, but we have participated in the activities for the implementation of projects of the administration.
- c. We have developed one/several joint projects and have participated in the activities for the implementation of projects of the administration.
- d. There are established working relationships between us and the administration. We participate in joint teams for the development of project proposals and subsequent project implementation.

Thank you for your participation!