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| **j0391798** | **EUROPEAN UNION – MONTENEGRO**  **Stabilisation and Association Agreement Special group ON Public Administration Reform (PAR)**  **12th Meeting** | **mn_horizontal** |
| **20 November 2024**  **Brussels / Hybrid format** | | |

**OPERATIONAL CONCLUSIONS**

**STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

1. Montenegro will adopt the PAR Strategy Action Plan 2025-2026, considering the findings and recommendations of the latest SIGMA monitoring assessment and the 2024 EC country report on Montenegro, and take measures to increase the implementation rate. The annual implementation report will be prepared by end March 2025.
2. Montenegro will establish a publicly available electronic system for monitoring and reporting progress in the field of public administration reform.

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION**

1. Montenegro will develop and adopt a methodology for calculating the costs of strategic documents in line with best international practices and launch its systematic application.
2. Montenegro will increase the share of draft laws and strategies that are submitted to public consultation and improve the functionality of the existing eParticipation portal.

**PUBLIC SERVICE AND HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

1. Montenegro will amend the Law on State Employees and Civil Servants and the Law on Local Civil Servants in line with the recommendations of the European Commission and SIGMA.
2. Montenegro will amend the Law on Local Self-Government, taking into account an analysis of functioning of the local self-government and in line with the recommendations of the European Commission and SIGMA.
3. Montenegro will introduce a competency framework for all categories of state employee positions.
4. Montenegro will take the necessary steps to limit the duration of acting positions for managerial posts as well as the appointments to such positions from outside the civil service.
5. Montenegro will continue with optimisation of public administration, taking into account functional reviews of the number of employees, their professions and skills in the ministries and authorities under supervision and recommendations of the State Audit Institution.
6. Montenegro will closely monitor and share data on de-centralized recruitments with the European Commission, in particular under the Law on internal affairs, and will ensure the respect of merit in all selections.
7. Montenegro will provide centralized data on the number of contracts for the engagement of individuals without establishing an employment relationship within the authorities governed by the Law on Civil Servants and State Employees.
8. Montenegro will focus on increasing stability of civil servants, including at managerial level, and ensuring protection against arbitrary decisions of removal from their posts.
9. Montenegro will develop a standardised way of allocating salary supplements with clear criteria.
10. Montenegro will strengthen the administrative capacity in public administration at the central and local levels, including by adopting an Employment Plan for new civil servants to manage EU funds, focusing on two pilot sectors (environmental protection, employment & social policy).

**ACCOUNTABILITY OF ADMINISTRATION**

1. Montenegro will adopt a new Law on Free Access to Information in line with EU acquis and best international standards and address the high number of requests for information and related appeals.
2. Montenegro will expedite the resolution of administrative disputes and improve the timely execution of court rulings by state authorities in cases related to the free access to information.

**SERVICE DELIVERY TO CITIZENS AND BUSINESS**

1. Montenegro will adopt a plan for full deployment of transactional national and local level public electronic services in 2025-2027, launch an e-government platform and ensure interoperability of relevant registers by February 2025 and ensure implementation according to the plan in 2025.