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| **j0391798** | **EUROPEAN UNION – MONTENEGRO**  **Stabilisation and Association Agreement Special group**  **Public Administration Reform (PAR)**  **11th Meeting** | **mn_horizontal** |
| **15 November 2023 (09:00 – 13:00)**  **Podgorica / Hybrid format** | | |

**OPERATIONAL CONCLUSIONS**

**Strategic framework**

1. Montenegro will strive to achieve the objectives of the 2022-2026 PAR Strategy according to the 2022-2023 and 2024-2026 action plans, using political and administrative level co-ordination mechanisms including all relevant stakeholders.
2. The relevant activities under the PAR Strategy will be included in the 2024 budget.

**Policy development and coordination**

1. Montenegro will take steps to improve the costing of strategic documents and increase the share of strategic documents linked to the programme budget.
2. Montenegro will increase the share of draft laws and strategies that are submitted to public consultation and take measures to improve the quality and coverage of the regulatory impact assessments (RIA).

**Public service and human resources management**

1. Montenegro will amend the Law on Civil Servants and State Employees in line with the European Commission and SIGMA recommendations. Subsequently, the Law on Local Self-Governance will be amended accordingly, taking into account the analysis of functioning of the local self-government.
2. Montenegro will take measures to increase the number of eligible candidates in the job advertisements and competitions to a satisfactory level, including for managerial positions.
3. Montenegro will collect and share with the European Commission annual data on the number of recruitments, dismissals, appeals, staff turnover, number of acting senior managers and duration of their mandates, as well as the number of fixed-term decisions based on Article 52 of the Law on Civil Servants and State Employees and their duration. In addition, Montenegro will continuously use the existing monitoring mechanisms for the purpose of enhanced control of service contracts.
4. Montenegro will take the necessary steps to improve stability at managerial level, reduce the risks of arbitrary dismissals due to reorganisations and revocations and reduce the number of acting managers.
5. Montenegro will improve the preparation of annual human resources (HR) plans and ensure that they are included in the budget.
6. Montenegro will continue with optimisation of public administration, taking into account functional reviews of administrative entities and recommendations of the State Audit Institution, aiming to expand the type of work contracts covered by the exercise.

**Accountability of administration**

1. Montenegro will ensure more effective implementation of lines of accountability within the public administration and delegation of authority in decision-making to an appropriate level.
2. Montenegro will ensure that the Register of Institutions is updated in line with the latest organisational changes and made available to citizens.
3. Montenegro will adopt amendments to the Law on Access to Information in line with the European and international standards and address the high number of requests for information and related appeals.
4. Montenegro will take measures to accelerate the treatment of the administrative disputes and enhance the enforcement of court judgements voluntarily by the public authorities.

**Service delivery to citizens and businesses**

1. Montenegro will further simplify the administrative procedures, including through further digitalisation of public services and inter-operability of registers and e-services.
2. Montenegro undertakes to advance the harmonisation of relevant implementing legislation with the Law on Administrative Procedures and to enhance the implementation of the law, notably as concerns the ‘once only’ principle and electronic communication.