



FINAC

FINancial management,
Accounting & Controlling
in public administration

FINAC PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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CONTENT:

1. Final FINAC conference at University of Belgrade
2. Strengthening human resource in public administration reform
3. FINAC project achievements

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1. FINAL FINAC CONFERENCE AT UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE

The first day of the Final conference was opened with the welcome note from the Vice Dean for international cooperation of the Faculty of Organizational Sciences, associate professor **Sanja MARINKOVIĆ**, PhD. She stressed the importance of FINAC project for the internationalization of the Faculty and networking with neighboring countries. Afterwards, the state secretary of the Ministry for Public Administration and Local Self Government Mr. **Ivan BOŠNJAK** addressed Conference participants and emphasized how FINAC project contributes to the capacity building of public administration employees. This was followed by the note from Mr. **Dražen MARAVIĆ**, who explained the perspective of the National Academy for Public Administration of Serbia. He pointed out that FINAC project was important for the strengthening of capacities in public administration. He also said that NAPA has already signed Strategic partnership agreement with Faculty of Organizational Sciences which is aimed at contributing to the sustainability of the Master program that is an important outcome of the FINAC project. Finally, project coordinator, professor **Slađana BENKOVIĆ** PhD. addressed all conference participants with the welcome words.



2. STRENGTHENING HUMAN RESOURCE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM – PRESENTED BY SANJA PUTNIK AND BLERJANA BINO

Assistant minister, Sanja PUTNIK, from the Ministry for Public Administration and Local Self Government of Serbia has pointed out some general objectives of the public administration reform of Serbia through:

- further enhancement of the PA operations in line with the principles of European Administrative Space
- high quality services for citizens and businesses and

- economic stability and improved living standard of citizens.

She also provided the details of the public administration reform strategy and action plan in the Republic of Serbia, with the particular action plan for the period 2018-2020.



The project leader at the European University of Tirana Blerjana BINO, PhD. explained in detail the progress of public administration reform in Albania from the policy making and legislation point of view. She also provided additional information about the organization and functions of public administration, human resource management and administrative procedures and monitoring. She also informed all present participants of Final conference about the objectives of public administration reforms in Albania and EU progress of integration.



3. The FINAC project achievements

Since the public administration is the backbone of an effective government, it is fundamental to the government's ability to provide competitive, progressive and high-quality public services. In addition to that – and particularly within the framework of the FINAC Project – public administration holds a central role in the EU integration process, as it compels further dialogue on implementing reforms and aligning with the EU standards of good governance. Therefore, it is frequently pointed out that “good governance and the right to good governance represent relatively recent important concerns, both for the national and the European governmental authorities“. The FINAC Project's key objective was improving public governance by improving its main components: reliability, predictability, accountability and transparency, together with technical and managerial competences, organizational capacities, financial sustainability and citizen participation.



Similar to the other countries harmonizing with the EU, Albania and Serbia are facing a myriad of challenges regarding their public administrations. One of these difficulties is insufficient capacities. Yet, another important part is a systemic resistance to the harmonization to the EU standards. In fact, just prior to the launching of the FINAC project, EU reports related the accession of Albania and Serbia emphasized that “senior public-sector managers need to be trained, in order to better understand their specific role and responsibilities in financial management and control“.

FINAC Project's overall goal was to improve the quality of budgeting, money management, financial management, accounting and control in the public administrations of Albania and Serbia. To achieve this goal, specific objectives were defined through the:

- Designing and developing of 5 new master' degree programs in public administration with focus on financial management, accounting and control; 3 of them in Serbia and 2 of them in Albania;
- Providing public administration employees in Serbia with training at University institute;
- Modernizing one Serbian master's degree program in the field of public financial management.



Three years later, all of these objectives have been successfully met. Namely,

- The modernized and new master's degree programs in Albania and Serbia have been approved and, in the 2018/2019 academic year, it was enrolled 198 students on six partner university institutions. For all of these students tuitions were paid by the project budget lines. It is important to stress out that 129 of master students are already employed in public administration and they should through horizontal transfer of gained knowledge, contribute to building of capacities of public administration in fields of financial management, accounting and controlling;
- Furthermore, over the course of the project, 100 employees in Serbian' public administration and 60 employees in Albania' public administration received training in field of financial management, control and managerial accounting;
- Lastly – and deserving special mention – 129 tripartite contracts were signed by the students, representatives of their regional HEI and representatives of the public administration. These agreements stipulate that the new graduates will continue working in public administration or local self-government, for at least two years after the completing their master' thesis, contributing on that way to the horizontal transfer of knowledge within the public administration.



These steps should contribute to strengthen of public administration capacities in public finance and thereby contribute to the implementation of Chapter 32 in the EU accession process of regional countries.

- It should also be highlighted the eight strategic alliances formed between regional higher education institutions and public administration organisations. These partnership contracts are bound to increase the visibility of the newly accredited / licensed master's degree programmes, but they also tangibly reinforce the FINAC Project's main goal: increasing the quality of budgeting, money management, financial management, accounting and control, in Albania's and Serbia's public administrations.



Conclusion on closing of FINAC project

All the partners that took participation on work of FINAC final conference have expressed their great satisfaction with the organization and content of the FINAC project together with hospitality and friendships created throughout the project. The partners have expressed their interest for further cooperation in follow ups and additional projects.



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