

Public Policies Management - Mission Impossible? -The Case of the Republic of Macedonia -

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‘Good governance’ means competent management of a country’s resources and affairs in a manner that is open, transparent, accountable, equitable and responsive to people’s needs. The coordination of policies creates conditions to standardize the decision making process and is a prerequisite for harmonization of policies of the various departments of state administration, in order to achieve it. Currently the most widely accepted approaches for policies management are Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) System and Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) System.

The RIA system assumes assessment of the impact of political options in terms of costs, benefits and risks, while the SIA System refers to making sustainability appraisal an integral component of the process of any policy developing. All sectors and bodies that possess statutory power and make decisions that have impact on the public, should carry out such assessments. This should be integral part of the policy of all governments.

The case of the Republic of Macedonia shows that the grounds for operation of both assessment systems concerning the basic public policies have already been established in a single integrated process in a unique methodological approach. Both systems are regulated, inter alia, in the Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia though not under the same name. For example, when submitting materials from Ministries and other bodies of the state administration to the Government, those are compulsory accompanied by a standardized material package containing the following elaborated elements: Considered possible solutions (pro and con arguments), The results of consultations conducted with the relevant ministries, other bodies of the state administration and organizations, Recommended solution, Fiscal implications, Expected impacts, Compliance with the law of the European Union, Evaluation of the material by the Secretariat of Legislation and Key elements for public information.

When it comes to public involvement in policy making/laws drafting, under the applicable legislation in the Republic of Macedonia and for the purpose of improving the system of policies adoption, as well as for the purpose of promoting democratic processes, bodies of the state administration ensure public participation by way of dissemination of the type, content and deadline of their adoption, organization of public debates and collection of opinions from interested civil associations, non-governmental organizations and other legal persons.

As far as complex issues are concerned, Ministers request additional support by experts from outside the Ministry (scientific and/or professional institutions, academic and/or

university level educational institutions, etc.) or specific inter-ministerial working group. In this context, the position of the public segment directly affected by the given issue is taken into account as well. Issues considered are analyzed from all points of view, with special emphasis on the analysis of analytical data (fiscal, social, environmental, etc.) which underpin the proposals of the ministries. This approach has set the foundations towards ensuring consistence, coherence and good coordination.

Furthermore, the Decree on the principles of internal organization of the bodies of the state administration specifies that: “The principles of internal organization shall ensure:

- legal, professional, efficient and cost-effective performance of activities and tasks
- service orientation to citizens and legal persons
- independence and accountability in official tasks performance
- uniformity of organizational forms
- adaptability in organizational forms to the responsibility of the body and needs of the citizens
- simplicity of hierarchical setup of organizational forms”.

Generally, it can be said that both systems are used in the Republic of Macedonia. The application of these systems contributes in greater coherence of public policies provided: through the standardized way of submitting materials to the Government, through the obligation of various stakeholders representatives inclusion in the processes of policy making and decision making in various areas, and through the establishment of a mechanism that enable harmonization of policies with the strategic priorities, key strategic documents and fiscal strategy. Yet, there are some identified omissions that should be overcome.