



Session I: Fiscal Transparency

Ministry of Finance

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ROLE OF THE MoF IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN (1)

- ◆ MoF is the implementing body for a large number of implementing activities from the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Initiative *Open Government Partnership* in the Republic of Croatia for the period 2012-2013
- ◆ Although so far the MoF carried out many activities aimed at improving fiscal transparency, we welcome the approach in which the interested public and civil society organizations are participating in shaping measures and activities that will contribute to greater fiscal transparency
- ◆ Feedback is important in the context of recognizing which information concerning the budget is most relevant to the public, how the public wants it to be presented ...



IMPORTANCE OF GETTING FEEDBACK

- ◆ The Action Plan's implementing activity:
 - *“Make simple and easily understandable summaries – guidebooks for citizens (e.g. Budget for Citizens) of key budgetary documents and publish them in a timely manner”*

- ◆ The MoF in the past published brochures:
 - *2006 State Budget: Investing in a fairer society and a strong economy*
 - *2006 State Budget Execution*
 - *2007 State Budget: For a balanced regional development of Croatia*
 - *2007 State Budget Execution*
 - *2008 State Budget: Competitiveness of Croatian society*
 - *Strategy of Government Programs and State Budget 2010-2012*

- ◆ A lot of time spent on preparation (graphic design, printing, editing)

- ◆ Never got the feedback (neither praise, nor complaints) on the usefulness, understandability ...

- ◆ When we stopped publishing – no response from the public



NEW APPROACH

- ◆ The Action Plan envisages preparation of guidebooks for citizens for a number of key budgetary documents:
 - *economic and fiscal policy guidelines, state budget proposal and projections, state budget and projections adopted by the Croatian Parliament, semi-annual and annual reports on the state budget execution*
- ◆ Taking into account the request of publishing them in a timely manner and administrative capacity, the MoF will simplify the format, will not go to print, but only for publication on the web
- ◆ It's important to get feedback from the public – is it in the acceptable format with the relevant information and easy accessible
- ◆ The need of interested public and civil society organisations and other interested institutions to actively participate in this approach (spreading the information)



ROLE OF THE MOF IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN (2)

- ◆ The Action Plan's implementing activities:
 - *“Give recommendations and instructions to all local and regional self-government units to publish, on their official web sites, key budgetary documents.”*
 - *“Make a standardized format for publishing guidebooks for citizens to accompany the local and regional self-government unit budgets and recommend their timely announcement to local authorities.”*
- ◆ Local units need help, especially the smaller ones
- ◆ The role of the MoF to help and direct them, but on the other hand to assess (due to the costs and their administrative capacity) what should be the legal requirement



THE SCOPE

- ◆ The Action Plan's implementing activity:
 - *“The Proposal of the State Budget contains: a) Information which shows how proposals of new legislation will influence the revenue and expenditure of the budgetary year in comparison with the existing legislation”*
- ◆ Although a number of measures and activities are planned mostly in connection with accessibility and public announcement of information from state/local budget and financial reports, the fiscal transparency is more than that
- ◆ The attention must be paid to the fiscal impact assessment of the proposals of laws and other regulations



OPEN ISSUE

- ◆ The State Budget and the Annual Report on Budget Execution documents contain over 1500 pages, of which 1000 pages of explanation of programs, activities and projects with performance indicators and performance information
- ◆ Strategic planning has been also introduced
- ◆ Currently, we are still getting questions from public and civil society organizations mostly related to how much has been spent, but not on the outcomes and achieved results
- ◆ Open question: How to get the public more interested in this information?

