

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY "FINAL EVALUATION OF ICT ACCESSIBILITY, EGOVERNMENT AND SERVICE SUPPORT MEASURES FOR EU FUNDS INVESTMENTS IN THE 2014-2020 PROGRAMMING PERIOD"

Context and objective of the evaluation

This document is a deliverable of SIA "CETERA" for the procurement of the Ministry of Finance "Final evaluation of ICT availability, eGovernment and service support measures for EU funds for the 2014-2020 programming period", procurement identification number - FM2023/29 (TP IZV),

The deliverable includes an assessment of the efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of investments of specific objective "Ensure an increase in the re-use of public data and effective interaction between public administration and the private sector" (hereinafter SAM 2.2.1) of the 2nd priority axis "ICT accessibility, e-government and services" (hereinafter - PA) of the operational programme "Growth and Employment" (hereinafter - OP) of the European Union (hereinafter - the EU) for the 2014-2020 programming period carried out in accordance with the tasks and requirements specified in the technical specification of the procurement.

The purpose of the document is to formulate the findings, insights and recommendations obtained during the evaluation, which would be used to justify the usefulness of SAM 2.2.1 investments, as well as to improve the policy of ICT governance and development of e-services in Latvia.

Tasks of the evaluation

1. Evaluate the shared-use solutions developed or improved within the SAM 2.2.1 projects.
2. Conduct a survey of users on the benefits of the solutions developed within the framework of the projects implemented by the State Chancellery (TAP portal and Common Website Platform for state and municipal government institutions).
3. Identify and describe the projects implemented within the framework of SAM 2.2.1 - examples of good practice that have made a significant contribution to the efficiency or growth of the industry or field, to the improvement of the institutions' core business processes or to their clients.
4. Evaluate the impact of SAM 2.2.1 investments on interaction between state and municipal government institutions.
5. Conduct a survey of the municipalities involved in the project implemented by the City of Riga within SAM 2.2.1 and the project implemented by the Ventspils City Municipality on the usability, benefits, problems of the solutions created within the framework of the projects.
6. Carry out a content assessment of the maintenance expenses of ICT solutions developed within the SAM 2.2.1 projects (at least 6-10 projects) after their going live.
7. Assess how the results of the projects implemented within SAM 2.2.1 have ensured the implementation of the following e-government principles laid down in the Information Society Guidelines 2014-2020 and whether the conditions for the implementation of these principles listed in the Guidelines were complied with in the implementation of the SAM 2.2.1 projects.
8. Prepare an evaluation report including 5 strategic recommendations.

Findings

In response to evaluation questions, the evaluation identified 45 findings, 32 recommendations and 6 strategic recommendations were made.

Main findings (A) according to the evaluation questions (Q) are as follows (questions and findings marked with * are in addition to those indicated in the terms of reference):

Q1. What are the actual benefits of public investment in the areas of public administration service management, data governance and ICT governance?

- A1. Both the project impact analysis and the opinions of project participants in general identify significant benefits of project implementation.
- A2. Benefits of project implementation are not systematically measured and, as a result, data-driven evidence of these benefits is not available.
- A3. The expected benefits of projects are not always complete, justified and realistic.
- A4. The methodology for project cost-benefit analysis is very complex and resource intensive in a given situation.

Q2. What are the benefits of the TAP portal?

- A5. The TAP portal is widely used, and project exceeds the initially planned indicators.
- A6. The TAP portal as a whole addresses user needs.
- A7. The main benefits of using the TAP portal are improvements in the speed and efficiency of the document reconciliation process, but with minimal benefits of costs and public participation.
- A8. Users of the TAP portal rate usability and accessibility as good.
- A9. TAP portal user support is rated as good.

Q3. What are the benefits of the Common Website Platform (TVP)?

- A10. TVP is widely used, and project exceeds the initially planned indicators.
- A11. TVP as a whole meets the needs of users.
- A12. The main benefits of using TVP in general correspond to the planned ones, the most important - a unified visual identity, relieving institutions of solving technical problems, less important - saving resources and improving communication.
- A13. The exchange of TVP data with the institution's IS is not significant - it mainly includes vacancy, service and procurement information.
- A14. TVP users rate usability and accessibility as good, while the maintenance model of the general solution needs to be developed.
- A15. TVP user support is rated as good.

Q4. What are the benefits of shared-use solutions created within SAM?

- A16. Although well conceived, the management framework for shared-use solutions is incomplete.

- A17. In general, the use of the most important shared-use solutions is ensured, however, due to shortcomings in the definition and in the monitoring of the shared services, it is not possible to obtain accurate data on its use.
- A18. The shared-use solutions that are used generally meet the needs of their users.
- A19. The main benefits of shared-use solutions relate to electronic and instant data exchange and to the improvement of citizen-centred communication.
- A20. Shared-use solutions most often implement data exchange with the main business systems of institutions, as well as document management information systems, the most transmitted data include e-address-related messaging, personal and procurement data.

Q5. What are the success and failure factors for using shared-use solutions?

- A21. The main success factors and prerequisites include defining and describing shared-use solutions, as well as ensuring the financing of their creation and maintenance.

Q6. What are the good practice examples of projects that have made a significant contribution to the efficiency of a field or sector?

- A22. Under SAM 2.2.1, many projects have made a significant contribution to the improvement of the field/sector.

Q7. What are the benefits of municipal sharing solutions?

- A23. Municipality Customer Information Management (PKIP) solutions in other municipalities, except Riga municipality, are practically not used.
- A24. PKIP solutions primarily meet the needs of Riga municipality.
- A25. The use of Ventspils project solutions complies with the planned.
- A26. In general, VDC project solutions meet the needs of users.
- A27. The main benefits of the VDC project are resource savings, as well as an increase in the range and quality of state and municipal services.
- A28. The usability of VDC solutions is generally good.
- A29. In the area of municipal solutions, there is an excessive dependence on a single supplier.

Q8. Did the SAM 2.2.1 projects ensure data exchange/once-only between municipalities and public administrations?

- A30. SAM 2.2.1 projects did not fully ensure the principle of data exchange/once-only between municipalities and public administration institutions.

*Q9. Were the needs of municipal governments met when implementing SAM 2.2.1 projects?**

A31. Although the cooperation of local governments with SAM 2.2.1 project implementers was assessed as good, the involvement of local governments was incomplete.

Q10. What is the amount and structure of actual maintenance costs?

A32. Annual maintenance expenses for the surveyed projects are on average 13% of the cost of creating solutions which fully correspond to industry average level.

A33. From maintenance expenses, the largest expenses are 31% - change requests; 24% - for ICT infrastructure and daily support/consulting.

A34. Overall, the amount and structure of additional maintenance expenses claimed by individual institutions are in line with demand.

*Q11. What are the challenges of maintaining ICT solutions built within the SAM? **

A35. Insufficient maintenance resources – the main challenges associated with maintaining solutions.

*Q12. Have the objectives and outputs of the projects been achieved?**

A36. Overall, the SAM 2.2.1 project target indicators have been formally achieved, but project objectives sometimes do not reflect the purpose and effectiveness of the intervention, and often the indicators do not reflect the achievement of the objectives

Q13. Are the objectives and objectives included in the planning documents fulfilled in the areas of public administration service management, data management and ICT management, taking into account the investments in SAM 2.2.1?

A37. SAM 2.2.1 result and outcome indicators have been partially achieved, there is no data on the increase in the use of e-services

Q14. What is the effectiveness of investments in achieving the objectives set out in the SAM 2.2.1 and national policy planning and regulatory documents?

A38. In general, the projects implemented in SAM 2.2.1 ensured the achievement of the objectives set out in SAM 2.2.1 and other documents, but there is no data for a quantitative impact assessment

A39. Overall, project activities/outputs ensured the achievement of project objectives

Q15. Did the projects follow the basic principles laid down in the information society guidelines and other documents?

A40. In general, project solutions comply with the basic principles of eGovernment.

A41. In general, the solutions developed within the SAM 2.2.1 comply with the principles laid down in the conceptual ICT architecture, however, in some areas it has not been possible to fully implement.

A42. VARAM generally provided oversight of the ICT architecture, but it can be improved in certain areas.*

*Q16. How is the overall framework for the implementation and monitoring of SAM 2.2.1 to be assessed?**

A43. Too many project documents with duplicative content, a large burden in their preparation and maintenance.

A44. Sometimes excessively bureaucratic and incommensurable control by the CFLA parties.

A45. KPVIS does not provide all information necessary for evaluation of all projects.

Strategic recommendations

As a result of the evaluation, the following strategic recommendations have been formulated:

- ◆ S1. When planning and evaluating projects, ensure the existence of a clear intervention logic that shows a clear link between the problem to be addressed, the objectives of the intervention, the result indicators, the actions and outputs and the output indicators, as well as carry out an assessment of the effectiveness of this intervention (VARAM, CFLA).
- ◆ S2. Ensure the definition and monitoring of the performance of result indicators, expanded output indicators (t.sk sharing solution) and benefits (VARAM, CFLA).
- ◆ S3. Specify the common ICT architecture of public administration, including setting specific requirements and guidelines for institution-building systems, as well as ensuring supervision of the implementation of this architecture (VARAM).
- ◆ S4. Clarify and develop the procedure for the management of shared-use solutions (definition/accounting, financial, maintenance, etc. aspects of such solutions) (VARAM, FM).
- ◆ S5. Implement the open-source principles in the development of publicly funded ICT solutions (VARAM).
- ◆ S6. Reduce the administrative burden for project implementation. (CFLA, VARAM).