REPORT ON THE BSEC WEBINAR

"THE ROLE OF E-GOVERNANCE AS A CITIZEN-CENTRIC AND EFFECTIVE APPROACH TO PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY"

03 November 2022

On 03 November 2022, the representatives of the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SAPSSI) and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Permanent International Secretariat (BSEC PERMIS) held a webinar titled "*The Role of E-Governance as the Citizen-Centric and Effective Approach to Public Service Delivery*." As a planned on the Plan of Action for 2021-2023 of the Working Group on Institutional Renewal and Good Governance, the webinar was to allow the sides to come together and discuss their experiences in the fields of public service and digitalization. The webinar was chaired by the Deputy Head of the International Relations Department at the SAPSSI, Ms. Turana Gasimova.

The event was attended by the representatives from the Republic of Albania, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, Hellenic Republic, Republic of Moldova, Republic of Türkiye and the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions.

The webinar was held in four thematic sessions, followed by a Q&A session each:

1. Integrated Service Management and Application of Innovations in Public Service Delivery (one-stop-shop)
2. Best Smart Solutions in the Era of Innovations: Development of E-Governance System (non-stop-shop)
3. Citizen Satisfaction as the Measurement of Good Governance
4. Role of Information Communication Technologies in Effective Governance.

It was commenced by the representatives of the SAPSSI and BSEC PERMIS who delivered their opening remarks. Taking the floor, the Deputy Chairman of the SAPSSI, Mr. Jeyhun Salmanov, greeted the participants and talked about the SAPSSI's active role in various fields. Amongst many other things, Mr. Salmanov touched upon the SAPSSI's activities in e-governance, noting that the area was of crucial importance for the future of public service delivery, as in bridging governments closer to their citizens. Following that, the representative of the BSEC PERMIS, Ms. Venera Domi, took the floor to welcome the participants and speak of the importance of convening the webinar. Noting its importance, Ms. Domi encouraged participants to contribute to the sessions through their active participation.

After that, the chairperson established the scope of the webinar by announcing that the representatives of the SAPSSI would deliver in-depth presentations on areas of their competence, namely digitalization, monitoring and assessment, and innovations. The chairperson then gave a presentation on the SAPSSI by providing the participants with general information on its activities. Specifically, Ms. Gasimova talked about the workings of the "ASAN Service" center, as well as the "E-Government Development Center," "Innovations Center," and "ABAD."

After the presentation, the chairperson welcomed the Head of the International Relations Department of the "E-Government Development Center," Mr. Aykhan Mustafayev, to talk about the Center's activities in the field of digitalization. In his presentation, Mr. Mustafayev talked extensively about various smart solutions that the E-GOV has developed over the years. Moreover, he informed the participants that the SAPSSI was transitioning from a "one-stop shop" to a "non-stop shop" model of public service delivery.

Afterward, the chairperson yielded the floor to the Head of the Division of the Monitoring and Assessment Department at the SAPSSI, Mr. Ruslan Akbarov, to deliver a presentation on the organization's measures to increase citizen satisfaction. On top of elaborating on monitoring activities, Mr. Akbarov also talked about the mobile "ASAN" service, explaining to participants the rationale behind this particular mode of public service delivery. The concept sparked interest among the participants who wanted to learn more about its operations.

Following the presentation, Ms. Gasimova yielded the floor to the Senior Advisor of the Digital Technologies and Innovations Department at the SAPSSI, Ms. Nigar Khalili, who delivered a presentation on the organization's activities in the area of innovations. In her presentation, Ms. Khalili informed participants of the SAPSSI's achievements in introducing innovations into governance. Talking about the role of startups, Ms. Khalili also spoke about the "INNOLAND" Incubation and Acceleration Center, the Tech Diaspora, and the "Baku Bilim" Center.

After the presentations, the representatives of the SAPSSI answered a few questions asked by the participants, thereby stimulating discussions on relevant matters. Overall, despite the e-governance's efficiency, performance, simplicity, accessibility, and transparency, it was established that it should not fully replace the in-person interactions, as they are essential for societal relations. As a conclusion to the webinar, the chairperson expressed their gratitude to everyone for their active involvement in the sessions.