

EGAP Program Impact Story Series: Fighting Corruption at the Regional Level through online services provision

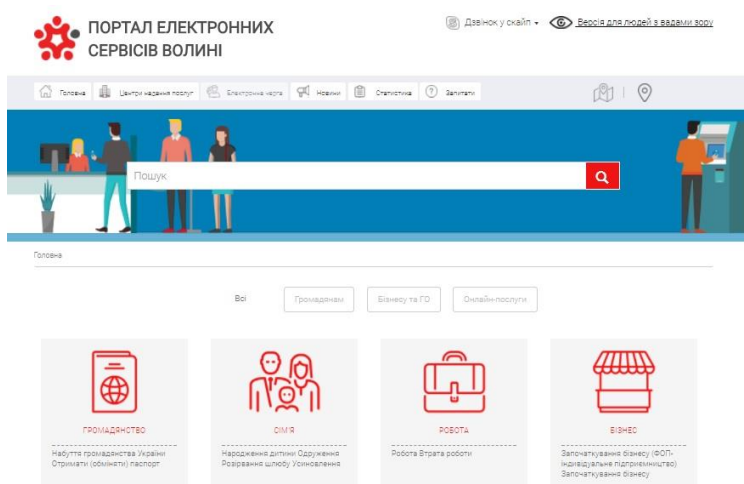
It is no secret that the current system of administrative services provision in Ukraine shows signs of corruption. Results of a sociological survey commissioned by the EGAP Program in 2015, however, showed that public perception of corruption varies in different regions of Ukraine. The following case study features Volyn region's¹, one of four targeted regions in the EGAP Program, latest accomplishments and future plans for curbing corruption and improving administrative service delivery through e-governance.

Despite citizens' perception of corruption in the Volyn region ranking among the lowest in the mentioned survey, the EGAP Program jointly with Volyn's regional administration further seeks to minimize corruption by advancing e-governance reforms. Improvement of administrative services both offline through the creation of integrated offices for administrative service provision (one-stop-shops) as well as online in electronic format are important for modernising the public administration system in Ukraine.

These initiatives are also important for the undergoing decentralization reforms in Ukraine where administrative power is increasingly being shifted to local self-government authorities. A key component in this process is the effective re-organization and improvement of how centers for the provision of administrative services (hereinafter CNAPs) operate and service citizens, including in the newly amalgamated territorial communities at the local level. For combatting corruption, automation of administrative service delivery is seen to increase government's transparency, efficiency and accountability through faster processing capacity and sheer removal of direct face-to-face interactions between citizens and authorities where ample opportunities for corruption tend to emerge.

UNIQUE SOLUTIONS INTRODUCED BY THE SWISS-UKRAINIAN EGAP PROGRAM

Automation of administrative services in Ukraine, however, is a complex endeavour. Assisting in this challenge and in an effort to implement anti-corruption measures, the Swiss-Ukrainian EGAP Program in Volyn region, introduced several comprehensive solutions using an integrated approach in the provision of administrative services linked to local administrative service centers (CNAPs). A complementary technical solution also included the creation of an integrated regional portal for electronic services (www.e-services.volyn.ua). The portal offers a comprehensive set of features for enhancing administrative transparency, efficiency, convenience and for reducing corruption. To ensure that new online solutions equally benefit disadvantaged populations in the region, social inclusion aspects were also respected. A more detailed account of the various features and initiatives undertaken by the Volyn team includes:



- Volyn's regional portal for electronic services was adapted to a friendly format for the visually impaired and was rolled out to all 23 CNAPs in the oblast;
- Classification of services related to life events was introduced based on international best practices;

¹ Volyn region is located in the North-Western part of Ukraine by the Polish border.

- A register of administrative services linked to the Volyn Regional Employment Department was created providing job seekers, employers and employees better access to state services;
- Customized automation of required information cards for each administrative service in subsidiary geographic areas connected to the Regional Portal was developed;
- Integration of the Regional Portal with the Regional administration's e-document exchange system as well as with the National Portal of Administrative Services (www.my.gov.ua) facilitates better access to e-services and online *personal cabinets* for citizens;
- Electronic queue control system was piloted in 4 CNAPs to enable transparent queue tracking for services provided offline, a common area prone to corruption. The system specifically targeted CNAPs in bigger cities whose number of visitors exceeds 1000 per day;
- A system of e-document exchange in the newly created CNAPs in newly amalgamated communities was introduced which greatly simplifies communication between government entities providing administrative services and allows citizens to transparently track the timeliness of service provision, accorded by law;
- System of SMS notifications for clients receiving services was introduced in 5 CNAPs in the region.

Information about the implemented measures is shared through local media channels as well as through the recently established *Volyn's School of e-Government*.

Overall, the implementation of the integrated Portal promotes convenient, high-quality online interaction between the public, business and authorities by minimizing face-to-face contact with government officials. Below is an example of positive and grateful feedback note from one of the system's users.

As the automation of administrative services and their full systemic integration at different levels of government is rather new in Ukraine, implementing these measures poses numerous challenges. Development of effective interoperability systems that connect different levels of government and entities linked to the value chain of service provision is still nascent in Ukraine hence particularly challenging. Standardizing, optimizing, reengineering of processes for efficient e-service delivery as well as skills gaps among administrators are also limiting a faster pace of necessary reforms.

Nonetheless, Ukraine must steadily plough ahead. We trust that EGAP's comprehensive approach to assisting CNAPs in their automation, more efficient and ultimately more effective delivery of administrative services will significantly impact on reducing corruption, on efficient data collection for the Central Statistical Bureau and for overall raising of standards for transparent and efficient quality service delivery to citizens of Volyn. In the near future, it is planned that the model developed in Volyn will be shared and replicated as a best practice in other regions of Ukraine.

KEY BENEFICIARIES

- All citizens of the Volyn oblast
- Regional and sub-regional administrative service centers in Volyn, including in newly amalgamated communities and administrative-territorial units
- Local executive authorities and local self-government bodies
- Higher educational establishments, public organizations, and
- IT businesses.

Дуже добре я надання ро-
вності і встановити інформації,
яка, щоб було надати єдине
інструментарій дізнатися про надані
датою роз'яснення та кожен-
клас, щоб бути більш ефективним
власно, якщо б у нас було
таким же, як у вас, то було б
і інформації та кожен в
якщо б було в нас було
таким же.

Ми вдячні Вам за співпрацю

20.02.2017
Дата