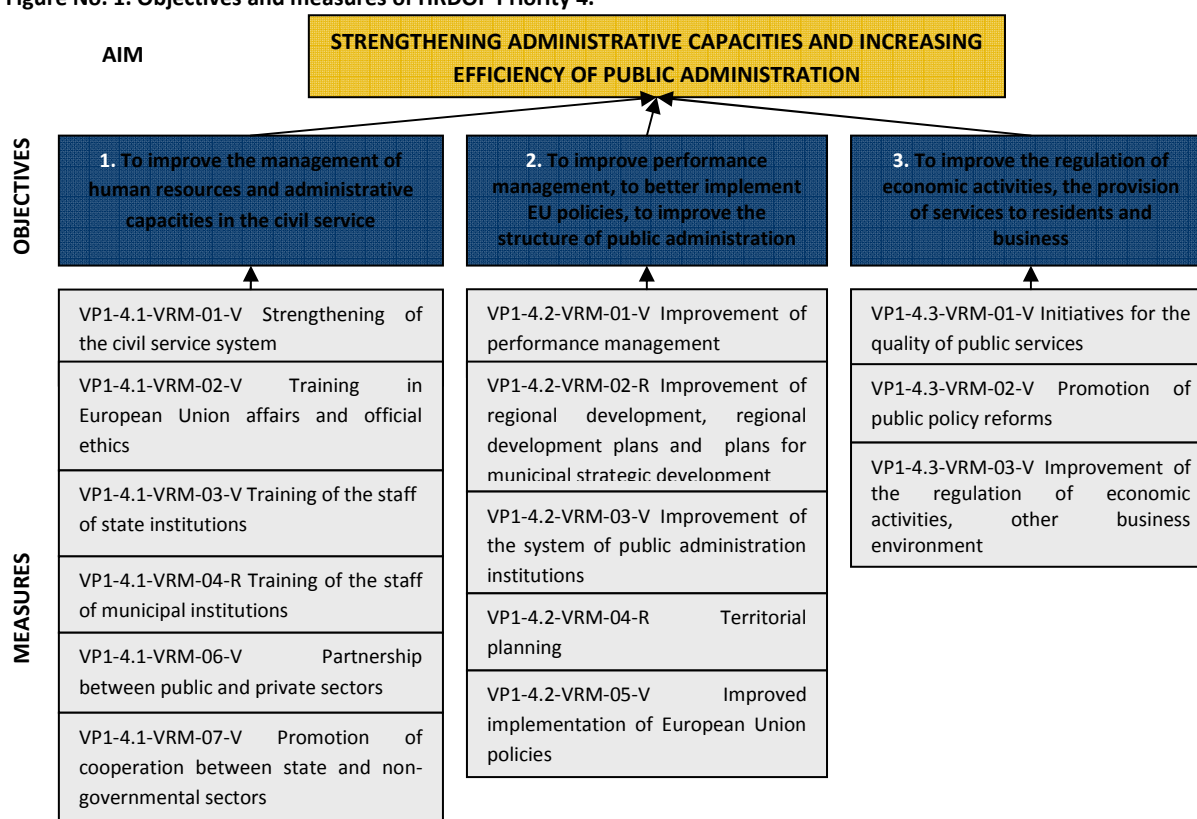


SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME PRIORITY 4

Scope and aims of the evaluation

The scope of this evaluation covered the Human Resources Development Operational Programme (HRDOP) Priority 4 “Strengthening administrative capacities and increasing efficiency of public administration”. This priority was implemented through 14 measures (11 measures supporting state projects and three measures supporting regional projects) that contribute to the achievement of the three objectives (see Figure No. 1).

Figure No. 1. Objectives and measures of HRDOP Priority 4.



As HRDOP Priority 4 was in the implementation phase during its evaluation, the number of its projects was constantly changing (growing from 470 to 560 in the end of evaluation). About 300 projects were implemented by city or rural authorities under three regional measures. Three main types of projects were supported under this priority: training of the civil servants, development of various management systems (financial and non-financial performance systems, quality management systems, document management systems and human resource management systems) and preparation of various documents (spatial planning, strategic regional and municipal planning documents).

The aim of this evaluation was to improve the implementation of HRDOP Priority 4. Main evaluation objectives were as follows:

- to assess the continued relevance of HRDOP Priority 4 under the changing social and economic situation as well as legislation;

- to assess the efficiency of the HRDOP Priority 4 administration;
- to assess intermediate results and the efficiency of the HRDOP Priority 4 implementation.

This evaluation was important due to the following four reasons. First, the priority of administrative capacity building is a new intervention area with the ESF support provided the first time in the programming period of 2007-2013. Second, Lithuania allocated the largest share of ESF assistance (18,2 %) for this priority compared to other EU-10 countries. Third, it was important to assess the link between the implementation of HRDOP Priority 4 and whole-of-government public management reform initiated by the Lithuanian government No. 15. Fourth, lessons from the ongoing implementation of HRDOP Priority 4 could be used during Lithuania's preparations for programming of the 2014–2020 EU Structural Funds.

Methodology of the evaluation

The ESF regulation provides support for strengthening institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administrations and public services at national, regional and local level and, where relevant, of the social partners and non-governmental organisations, with a view to reforms, better regulation and good governance especially in the economic, employment, education, social, environmental and judicial fields. This could be done by applying various mechanisms foreseen in this regulation.

The evaluation was based on three general public administration/management models: *traditional administration*, *the New Public Management and governance*. Under the traditional administration model administrative capacities are built following a legalistic and internal approach, emphasising administrative structures and inputs. Under the NPM model a managerial and external approach is followed, with emphasis on results. Under the governance approach a mixed model is used, linking inputs and results through organisational processes.

Also, the evaluation tested various propositions from public policy and public administration studies. First, based on the policy implementation literature the evaluation analysed the extent to which the intermediate body, the implementing agency and the project beneficiaries have sufficient *capacity and willingness to implement* capacity building measures or projects. Second, based on the project management literature the evaluation analysed the extent to which the project beneficiaries have sufficient *organisational maturity* to manage the ESF-supported projects in terms of project management leadership, project management offices and procedures in the beneficiary organisations.

Moreover, the evaluation was based on the systemic approach, covering all important issues of administrative capacity: *structures* (relating to overall institutional set-up, competences of functions of individual institutions, inter-institutional cooperation and partnership), *human and financial resources* (relating to the number of staff, their competence and motivation and financial appropriations for individual institutions), as well as *management systems and tools* (including the application of IT and organisational processes) that could be financed from the ESF support.

The evaluation applied a *mixed quantitative-qualitative methodological approach* with the following methods:

- *An analysis of primary and secondary sources* (documents, legal acts, reports, previous evaluations and research, monitoring data, etc.);
- *Interviews*: 21 interviews with 29 civil servants and other employees were conducted;

- *An on-line survey of project managers* according to the questionnaire was carried out (with replies from 334 respondents out of 496);
- *Case studies*: an in-depth evaluation of 13 projects from each measure (except one) of HRDOP Priority 4 was made;
- *Prospective analysis*: SWOT analysis and alternatives' analysis was carried out;
- *Involvement of stakeholders* into the process of drafting evaluation recommendations.

In order to achieve reliable results, the principle of data and methods' triangulation was ensured.

Main results of the evaluation

Relevance

The re-allocation of ESF assistance in response to changed circumstances during the implementation

During the implementation of HRDOP Priority 4 the ESF assistance was re-allocated among different priorities and measures. Under HRDOP Priority 4 the volume of assistance was increased mostly for the measure "Improving the system of public administration subjects", while it was decreased mostly for the measure "Promotion of public policy reforms". These changes were related to particular circumstances of the Priority 4 implementation. First, the decision to implement the accounting reform in a decentralised way (with each local authority developing its own IT-based financial management system) made it necessary to increase the ESF support and national co-financing to the former measure. Second, the lack of structural reform projects from the Lithuanian ministries responsible for particular structural reforms brought the need to reduce the ESF support and national co-financing under the latter measure, despite its strategic link with the aims of HRDOP Priority 4 and higher-level strategies (including the Lisbon strategy and its implementation programme at the national level).

The limited impact of the government priorities on the implementation of HRDOP Priority 4

The most important changes during the implementation of HRDOP Priority 4 were related to the financial and economic crisis, as well as the implementation of the government priorities in the area of public management. Despite the formulation of many whole-of-government priorities, assistance from HRDOP Priority 4 has been granted only in the area of performance-based management (under the project "Improvement of performance-based management" managed by the Prime Minister's Office in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance), preparation for the Lithuanian EU Presidency (under the project "Increasing efficiency of Lithuania's European Union affairs system" managed by the Prime Minister's Office in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European Law Department under the Ministry of Justice) and in the area of public services/one-stop-shop (under the projects supported under the measure "Initiatives for the quality of public services"). No support has been provided to the on-going structural reforms in the policy areas of social protection, health and energy. The limited contribution to the implementation of the government priorities was related to the procedures of non-competitive selection for state projects (the fact that most projects were initiated on the "bottom-up" basis) and the lack of thematic coordination at the government level and across different Lithuanian ministries (the Ministry of the Interior as the intermediate body vis-à-vis other ministries responsible for particular structural reforms).

The projects of management systems and training prevail, while the number of structural and system-level projects was limited

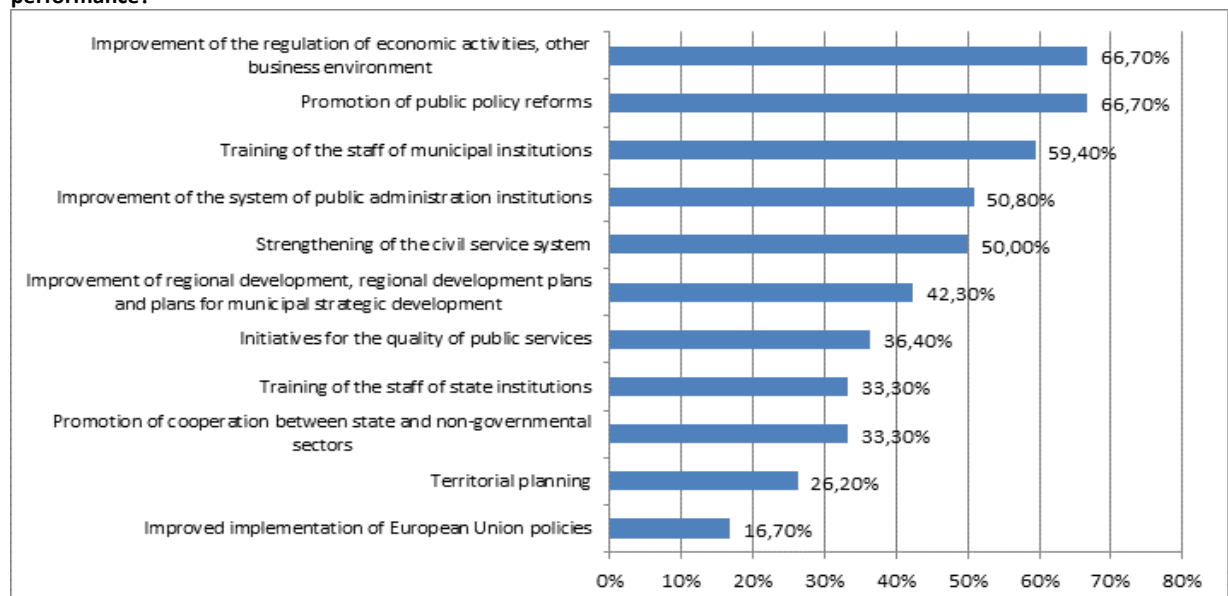
The analysis of administrative capacity building projects (not involving the projects supporting the preparation of documents that indirectly contribute to administrative capacity building) showed that the ESF assistance was mainly provided to the development of IT-based management systems and the training of the civil servants, while there were few structural projects supporting overall institutional structure or inter-institutional cooperation. According to the survey results, most frequent project activities included training, preparation of spatial planning documents, various studies, research, strategic and other documents. The survey results also showed that the majority of projects were devoted to individual institutions and their respective units. The system-level projects were not implemented by the Lithuanian local authorities at the time of evaluation.

Mixed relationship between the ESF-supported projects and organisational needs of their beneficiaries

According to the survey results, the civil servants and their managers had the strongest influence on the formulation of project ideas. Also, the requirements of Lithuanian legislation and other legal acts often served as a basis for the project design (especially for projects supported under the measures “Improving of the regulation of economic activities, other business environment” and “Territorial planning”).

Although the vast majority of the supported projects met organisational needs of the project beneficiaries, its extent varied according to different measures and types of institutions. For example, the projects implemented by the Lithuanian Parliament and the ministries, as well as the projects supported under the measures whose aims are related to certain public policies (“Promotion of public policy reforms” and “Improvement of the regulation of economic activities, other business environment”), were less related to their organisational needs. The same was true for the small training projects focused on general competences and the municipal projects developing various management systems. On the opposite, the relevance of large system-level projects was very high.

Figure No. 2. Survey results according to the question – “Whether the HRDOP Priority 4 measures and support areas correspond to your organisational needs to strengthen administrative capacities and improve the efficiency of performance?”



Source: the survey of the project beneficiaries.

Gaps in the intervention logic, especially in providing support to the development of management systems

Some measures of HRDOP Priority 4 suffered from the lack of appropriate intervention logic. This problem was particularly pronounced for the measures supporting the development of various management systems (“Improvement of the system of public administration institutions“, “Initiatives for the quality of public services” and “Promotion of public policy reforms”). The ESF assistance in this area was provided based on a quantitative, IT-based and supply-driven approach producing the proliferation of IT-based management systems, which were developed primarily through the procurement of external services.

In addition, some measures (such as “Territorial planning” and “Improvement of regional development, regional development plans and plans for municipal strategic development”) did not directly contribute to the overall aim of HRDOP Priority 4 to strengthen administrative capacities and increase the efficiency of public administration. Although their targets had been already achieved during the programme implementation, the ESF assistance was still provided in this area.

Systemic problems of the civil servants’ training (such as underdeveloped management of personnel and competences in the civil service, insufficient coordination of the civil servants’ training, inadequate definition of training needs) negatively contributed to the design and quality of the training projects supported under HRDOP Priority 4. These projects were rarely defined on the basis of annual training plans for the civil servants, while the selected projects were often small, implemented in a decentralised way and insufficiently contributing to personal competences.

Efficiency

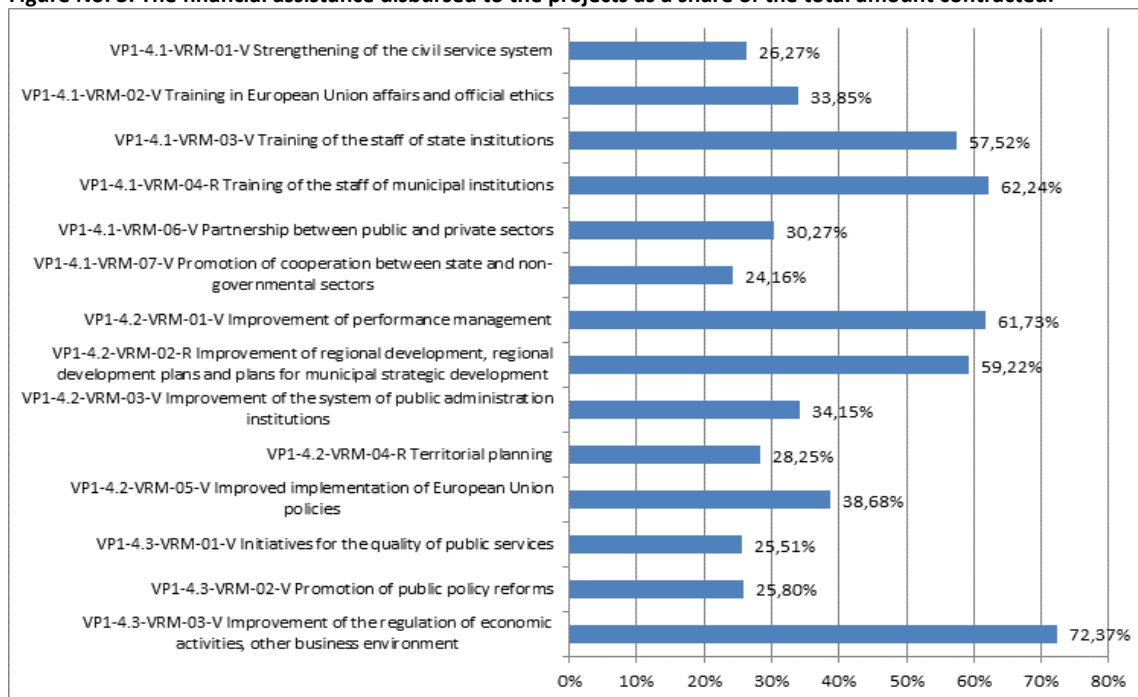
Insufficient thematic coordination of a horizontal priority

When HRDOP Priority 4 became a new horizontal area of intervention supported by the ESF, the Lithuanian Ministry of the Interior was designated as a new intermediate body in the EU programming period of 2007-2013. Since HRDOP Priority 4 is horizontal in its nature, about half of the priority measures fall outside the competence of the Ministry of the Interior. Therefore, thematic coordination is crucial both at the planning and implementation stages of the priority life-cycle. However, the results of the evaluation show that there has been a lack of such thematic coordination during the planning and implementation of Priority 4. However, it is important to note that in 2011 the intermediate body started on-the-spot checks under the measures falling within its competence (especially the measure “Initiatives for the quality of public services”). Also, although the cooperation between the intermediate institution and the implementing agency (ESFA) was initially insufficient, the situation has improved during the programme implementation.

Relatively slow absorption of assistance under HRDOP Priority 4

The total allocation from the ESF and national budget for this priority amounts to 612,13 mln. Lt. The allocation of assistance for different measures varied between 4-185 mln. Lt. Also, there was a large variation in terms of the number of projects supported under different measures (from 1 to 170 projects). According to the data of 17 August 2011, the volume of assistance contracted was about 478 mln. Lt (78 %), while the volume of assistance disbursed amounted to about 37 %. A large volume of assistance (40-50 %) has not been disbursed under several measures (“Training of the staff of municipal institutions“, “Territorial planning“, “Improvement of regional development, regional development plans and plans for municipal strategic development“, “Promotion of public policy reforms”). Under the first three measures regional projects were selected through the non-competitive selection procedure.

Figure No. 3. The financial assistance disbursed to the projects as a share of the total amount contracted.



Source: Prepared according to the data from <www.esparama.lt> (Data of 17 August 2011).

High administrative costs of HRDOP Priority 4

An average value of one project supported under HRDOP Priority 4 was 0,87 mln. Lt. The most expensive were large system-level projects supported under the following measures: “Training in European Union affairs and official ethics”, “Promotion of cooperation between state and non-governmental sectors”, “Improvement of performance management”, “Partnership between public and private sectors”. The projects supported under the regional measures were the cheapest.

It is important that the administrative costs of HRDOP Priority 4 were the highest within this ESF-funded operational programme. The evaluation results showed that compared to other priorities of this programme HRDOP Priority 4 was characterised by a very low average project value and a low average amount of payment requests, which created sizeable administrative costs.

Table No 1. Characteristics determining the administrative costs of the ESF-funded priorities.

The priority	The average size of the measure, mln. Lt	The average value of the project (mln. Lt)	The average size of payment request (mln. Lt)	The frequency of payment requests per 1 mln. Lt	Number of verifications of public procurement per 1 mln. Lt	Number of contract changes per 1 mln. Lt disbursed	Number of hours needed to administer 1 mln. Lt
1.1. Quality employment and social inclusion	86	18,3	1,39	0,72	5,3	5,1	535
1.2. Lifelong learning	51	21,6	0,51	1,98	3,6	2,4	577
1.3. Strengthening capacities of researchers	46	14,5	0,57	1,74	10,0	2,2	583
1.4. Strengthening administrative capacities and increasing efficiency of public administration	44	5*	0,44	2,27	3	4	671

Source: Public Policy and Management Institute. Pilot Evaluation of Human Resources Development Operational Programme interventions’ administrative costs. Vilnius, 2010.

*According to the HRDOP Priority 4 evaluation, the average value of the project is 0,87 mln. Lt.

Satisfactory implementation of the administration functions by ESFA

According to the survey results, the project managers were quite satisfied with the activities and functions performed by ESFA. The survey results showed that the project managers were satisfied mostly with telephone consultations, information reports by e-mail and reports from the internal data exchange website. Their assessment of the clarity of administrative rules was positive, except for some eligibility and other financial rules (but the issue of cross-financing has been already solved). Moreover, the survey results showed that the project managers were satisfied with the speed of administrative procedures: scrutiny and approval of payment requests and project reports. On the other hand, the speed of selecting project applications, coordinating project contracts and public procurement processes was assessed less positively.

Public procurement and human resources were the largest implementation problems at the project level

The main problems experienced by the project beneficiaries were related to the issues of public procurement and human resources. The problems of public procurement were particularly pronounced during the implementation of projects supported under the measures of various management systems. All five irregularities identified by ESFA during the programme implementation were associated with the violations of the national public procurement legislation. The problems of human resources most frequently occurred during the implementation of the projects supported under such measures as “Improving of the system of public administration subjects”, “Initiatives for the quality of public services” and “Training the staff of state institutions”.

Insufficient project management capacities

The efficiency of project implementation depends largely on existing project management capacities of the beneficiary institutions. However, the evaluation results showed that such capacities were underdeveloped. Only about 26 % of the survey respondents indicated that internal projects administration rules have been approved in their institution. Only 24 % of the respondents claimed that a risk management plan has been approved. It is important to mention that the project beneficiaries (especially the ministries and local authorities, which implement a large number of EU-financed projects) frequently procured project administration services from the market (instead of developing internal project management capacities). However, their satisfaction with such services was quite low.

Effectiveness

Risks concerning the non-achievement of the programme-level targets

At the time of evaluation HRDOP Priority 4 was in the implementation stage with many projects still on-going. Also, public procurement procedures have not been completed under many projects. Therefore, it was possible to assess only intermediate effectiveness of this priority. Monitoring data showed some deviations from the targets set at the operational programme level. A high deviation was found for the indicator “The average period for establishing an enterprise”, whose target cannot be achieved in the absence of projects supporting the improvement of business environment under HRDOP Priority 4. In addition, there was a medium risk for not achieving the targets of several indicators set in the operational programme (the number of trained civil servants; the number of cooperation and partnership projects; the number of better regulation projects; the number of quality management systems, etc.). Also, some deviations from the initial targets occurred at the level of measures.

Table No 2. HRDOP Priority 4 indicators and risk for their non-achievement.

No.	Level of risk for not achieving the programme-level targets	Indicators
1.	High risk	The average period for establishing an enterprise.
2.	Medium risk	The number of trained civil servants; the number of cooperation and partnership projects; the number of better regulation projects; the number of quality management systems.
3.	Low risk	The number of performance management systems implemented in Lithuanian ministries; number of general territorial plans prepared in municipalities; public expenditure, which includes performance management systems in 13 ministries; the part of state and local government spending, which includes the quality management system.

Mixed satisfaction with the quality of services provided by external providers

About 90 % of the survey respondents indicated that they procured services from the market for the implementation of project activities. Therefore, project results depend largely on the quality of such services provided by external providers. According to the survey results, the best external services were provided when implementing projects supported under the following measures: “Promotion of public policy reforms”, “Improved implementation of European Union policies”, “Improving of the regulation of economic activities, other business environment”, “Training the staff of state institutions”, “Training the staff of municipal institutions”. The quality of external services was assessed less positively for the implementation of the projects supported under the following measures: “Improving of regional development, regional development plans and (long-term/short-term) plans for municipal strategic development”, “Strengthening the civil service system”, “Territorial planning”, “Initiatives for the quality of public services”.

The survey respondents indicated that the best-quality services were provided by training institutions or companies. The quality of services provided by business consulting/audit firms and engineering/design companies was rated worse. The quality of services provided under the projects developing various management systems was also scored poorly. Although the larger, system-level projects well met the organisational needs, their implementation often suffered from the insufficient quality of external services. These results showed a lack of capacities in the Lithuanian private sector to implement large capacity building projects.

Organisational changes during the implementation of HRDOP Priority 4

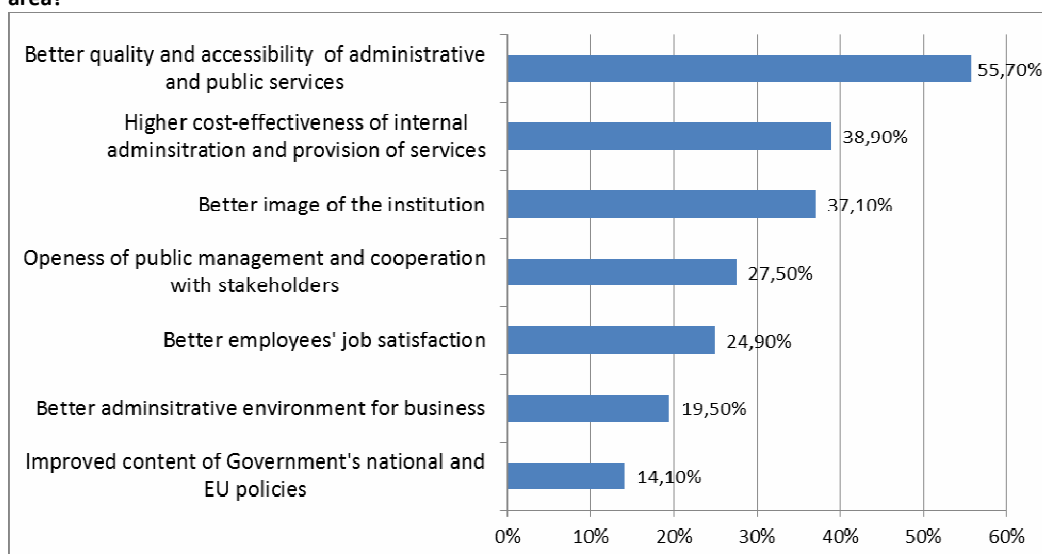
Since HRDOP Priority 4 was at the implementation stage, it was difficult to measure specific results and impacts of the supported projects. However, the evaluation showed that some changes have already occurred in the area of competences of civil servants and other employees. A part of the survey respondents argued that some changes have occurred in the areas of human resources, finance, asset, performance and quality management processes, as well as in the area of institutional strategies and performance planning. No considerable changes have occurred in other areas. There have been little organisational changes under the projects of management systems due to some delays in their execution. The projects of quality management were found to be the most cost-effective among the projects supporting various management systems: although their budget was below the average of other projects developing management systems, they were less risky, and their implementation has already brought some organisational changes (especially at the central level).

Expected impact of HRDOP Priority 4

The survey results showed that the biggest impact will materialise in the areas of better quality and accessibility of administrative/ public services. Also, the projects should increase the cost-effectiveness of internal administration and services

provision, as well as to improve the image of the project beneficiaries. According to the survey results, the contributions of the supported projects are likely to be lower in the area of better policy content and favourable business environment because these areas have attracted a limited number of projects.

Figure No. 4. Survey results according to the question – “In your opinion, in which area your project will make the biggest impact for improvement of public management in your institution or policy area?”



Source: the survey of the project beneficiaries.

The following table summarises the assessment of each measure supported under HRDOP Priority 4. It shows that all regional measures were the most expensive to administer, while the measures supporting the preparation of various documents („Improvement of regional development, regional development plans and plans for municipal strategic development” and “Territorial planning”) were characterised by the combination of high administrative costs and small contribution to the aims of HRDOP Priority 4.

Table No.3. Summary evaluation of HRDOP Priority 4 measures.

No.	Measures	Meeting organisational needs of strengthening administrative capacities	Average value of the project (mln. Lt)	Administrative costs (hour/1mln. Lt)	Not contracted share of assistance devoted to the measure (%)	(Likely) achievement of indicators	Quality evaluation of external service providers	Changes in respective public management areas
1.	VP1-4.1-VRM-01-V "Strengthening of the civil service system"	A lot	3,55	523	6,17	Good	Low	Average
2.	VP1-4.1-VRM-02-V "Training in European Union affairs and official ethics"	Enough	16,01	353	53,13	Good	High	Many
3.	VP1-4.1-VRM-03-V "Training of the staff of state institutions"		1,13	666	7,61	Good		
4.	VP1-4.1-VRM-04-R "Training of the staff of municipal institutions"	A lot	0,23	894	50,77	Good	High	Many
5.	VP1-4.1-VRM-06-V "Partnership between public and private sectors"	Enough	5,88	623	0	Good	High	Many
6.	VP1-4.1-VRM-07-V "Promotion of cooperation between state and non-governmental sectors"		5,98	503	2,29	Good		
7.	VP1-4.2-VRM-01-V "Improvement of performance management"	A lot	7,97	594	0,25	Good	High	Average
8.	VP1-4.2-VRM-03-V "Improvement of the system of public administration institutions"		1,94	532	5,28	Good		
9.	VP1-4.2-VRM-02-R "Improvement of regional development, regional development plans and plans for municipal strategic development"	Enough	0,13	1447	44,56	Good	Average	Many
10.	VP1-4.2-VRM-04-R "Territorial planning"	Not applicable	0,26	786	43,38	Good	High	Not applicable
11.	VP1-4.2-VRM-05-V "Improved implementation of European Union policies"	Enough	2,05	498	30,11	There is a risk	High	Average
12.	VP1-4.3-VRM-01-V "Initiatives for the quality of public services"	Enough	0,90	1323	4,85	There is a risk	High	Many
13.	VP1-4.3-VRM-02-V "Promotion of public policy reforms"	A lot	3,13	402	45,59	Good	High	Little
14.	VP1-4.3-VRM-03-V "Improvement of the regulation of economic activities, other business environment"	A lot	1,02	868	0	There is a risk	High	Many

Prospective analysis

According to the analysis of strengths and weaknesses of HRDOP Priority 4 and its areas for improvement, few possible alternatives for administrative capacity building and improving the efficiency of public administration were proposed for the future:

- *Status quo*: the existing content of HRDOP Priority 4 and its administration system would not be changed, and projects would be supported according to the existing procedures;
- *The first alternative*: the existing content of HRDOP Priority 4 would be improved by reducing the number of measures (terminating the ESF support to the measures that do not directly contribute to the main goal of this priority and integrating similar measures) and focusing on the measures supporting the training of the civil servants and certain organisational changes. In addition, the administrative system of this priority would be improved by strengthening thematic coordination and monitoring the implementation of future measures more closely, as well as reducing administrative burden for the project beneficiaries;
- *The second alternative*: a separate HRDOP Priority 4 would cease to exist, but the current measures would be integrated into other priorities of particular operational programmes according to their content and institutional competences. Financial assistance in the area of strengthening administrative capacities would focus on such measures as better regulation, efficient use of public resources and structural reforms (as provided under the national reform programme for the implementation of EU 2020 strategy).

The survey respondents argued that in the EU programming period of 2014-2020 financial assistance for strengthening administrative capacities should be continued, ensuring continued support to the measures implemented in the 2007-2013 period. The most relevant areas for support remained the civil servants' training, improving the quality of public/administrative services and improving human resource management. The least relevant areas were the promotion of public policy reforms, the improvement of inter-institutional cooperation, the improvement of institutional structure or improving the partnership between the public and private sectors, as well as support to NGO's.

Given the changes in strategic environment and organisational needs for the new EU programming period of 2014-2020, it was suggested to integrate the first and the second alternatives. Priority should be given to improving the efficiency of public finance, better regulation, financing of structural reforms. Responsibility for these measures should be assigned to appropriate intermediate and implementing agencies. Also, projects aiming at supporting personal competences and organisational changes should be implemented. The Ministry of the Interior could be responsible for the coordination of such projects, while ESFA could be responsible for their administration.

Table No 4. The proposed logic for strengthening administrative capacities in the next programming period.

The aim of strengthening administrative capacities and increasing efficiency of public administration		
Ministry of the Interior as an intermediate body		Other ministries as intermediate bodies
Projects strengthening personal skills	Projects of organisational changes	Structural and system-level projects
Such measures as: – Training in European Union affairs and official ethics; – Training of the staff of state institutions; – Training of the staff of municipal institutions.	Such measures as: – Improvement of the system of public administration institutions; – Initiatives for the quality of public services; – Improvement of performance management; – Strengthening of the civil service system.	Such measures as: – Improvement of the system of public administration institutions; – Improvement of the regulation of economic activities, other business environment; – Partnership between public and private sectors.
ESFA as an implementing agency		Other agencies act as the implementing agencies

Main conclusions and recommendations

The implementation of HRDOP Priority 4 has been based on the NPM model. First, in terms of project content, the largest volume of assistance was allocated to various management systems and tools (in particular for the management of financial and non-financial performance). Second, during the project implementation the beneficiary institutions frequently procured external services both for the implementation of project activities and the project administration. Third, the projects were often devoted to individual institutions and their units, with little cooperation among different institutions and limited exchange of good practice. The NPM-based implementation approach has not sufficiently contributed to strengthening administrative capacities of the state and municipal institutions and has not ensured the result-based orientation of ESF assistance (despite the application of financial sanctions in the case of irregularities). Therefore, there is a need to re-assess overall approach to administrative capacity building in the future.

More specifically, the evaluation showed that taking into consideration various changes in the public management system, it was important to increase the relevance of projects both at the systemic and institutional levels so that they could better match changing needs. In addition, given the weaknesses identified, it was necessary to improve project selection and administration procedures in order to bring the projects more in line with the government priorities, the needs of the project beneficiaries, to simplify the project administration and reduce administrative burden for the implementing agency. It was also important to improve the logic of intervention under the measures supporting management systems and, to a lesser extent, the civil servants' training. Finally, to achieve better results in the implementation of projects supported under HRDOP Priority 4, at the programme level there was a need for improved inter-institutional cooperation, more intensive project monitoring and control, while at the project level one needed to strengthen internal capacities of project beneficiaries and help addressing their human resource and public procurement problems.

Recommendations for the period of 2007-2013:

1. Changing the programme-level indicators of HRDOP Priority 4:

- As this evaluation identified a risk that certain targets of HRDOP Priority 4 will not be achieved, it is proposed to assign the indicator “the average period for establishing an enterprise”, whose target is unlikely to be achieved, to contextual indicators, replacing it with a result-level indicator concerning the reduction of administrative burden for businesses;
 - Other indicators, whose risk of target non-achievement is medium, should be monitored more closely and, if needed, necessary corrective actions should be taken.
2. Improving the non-competitive selection of projects:
- Since few system-level, structural projects were supported under HRDOP Priority 4 and only few projects were implemented by the regulatory agencies, it is recommended to use the remaining assistance of HRDOP Priority 4 more effectively by supporting more structural and system-level projects and encouraging the agencies under the Parliament and Government to apply for ESF assistance;
 - In addition, the process of non-competitive project selection process should be improved in order to select better state or regional projects.
3. Using opportunity to support projects dealing with structural reforms:
- Given the fact that no projects of structural reforms (in the area of health care, education and social protection) have been supported under HRDOP Priority 4, it is recommended to test this opportunity of assistance in the current programming period of 2007-2013;
 - It is important to communicate this opportunity of assistance to the ministries, to discuss possible projects in the Government or among representatives from different ministries and to disseminate examples of good practice.
4. Improve inter-institutional cooperation during the planning and monitoring stages:
- As there was lack of thematic monitoring of measures and projects during the implementation of HRDOP Priority 4, it is recommended to increase the cooperation between the intermediate institution of this priority, other institutions and the implementing agency during the implementation process (e.g. through joint committees or working groups, joint inter-institutional meetings, discussions of relevant issues).
5. Simplified administration of the priority:
- Taking into consideration certain deficiencies of the administration system of HRDOP Priority 4, it is proposed to clarify to the beneficiaries the rules concerning the recruitment and assignment of the civil servants and other employees for implementing project activities;
 - In addition, the rules should be simplified for projects that are similar to technical assistance projects;
 - In the case of public procurement, methodological recommendations should be prepared concerning the procurement of management systems.
6. Improvement of project management:
- Since the project beneficiaries were lacking project management systems, and their employees had insufficient analytical and project management skills, it is recommended to transform project management in the state and municipal institutions that implement many EU supported projects;
 - Also, it is important to provide centrally organised training for the project managers and other staff responsible for the implementation of EU-funded projects;

Recommendations for the period of 2014-2020:

7. Alternatives for the period of 2014-2020:

- Taking into account the EU and Lithuanian strategic documents as well as the provisions of future EU regulations, it is recommended to separate projects for strengthening personal competencies and projects of organisational changes from projects dealing with structural reforms during the programming of the EU structural assistance for the period of 2014-2020;
- All these projects should be integrated into the National Progress Programme;
- The EU support for strengthening administrative capacities should be more oriented towards results.

8. Application of the governance model:

- Since most project activities are implemented by external providers, while the involvement of the beneficiaries in the project implementation process was quite low, it is recommended to move towards the governance model during the implementation of projects in the area of strengthening administrative capacities in the future. This would mean an emphasis on such issues as horizontal co-ordination, inter-institutional cooperation, involvement of stakeholders, collection of evidence and its application in the decision-making process, improvement of inter-institutional processes, and exchange of best practices.

9. Improvement of the training projects:

- As the majority of the training projects were small and aimed at strengthening some general competencies (such as improving English language and computer literacy skills), the training projects were seldom initiated according to annual institutional plans, and training needs were identified not systematically, it is recommended to take into account the priorities set out in the new National Strategy for the Civil Servants' Training for 2011-2013;
- More large-scale training projects should be financed, and the civil servants training should be more coordinated and centralised.

10. Improvement of projects developing management systems:

- it is proposed to move to a more a qualitative, demand-based and content-oriented approach when supporting projects of management systems in the period of 2014-2020. This implies that the number of management systems' projects should be reduced, more centralised and integrated approach should be applied, less complex management systems or measures could be developed, more attention should be paid to the content and processes of management systems, the employees of the beneficiaries should be actively involved into the process of project implementation process, more attention should be paid to the dissemination of projects through a competence centre of management systems provide advisory services to state and municipal institutions for the design and implementation of such projects.