

INTER MUNICIPAL COOPERATION AS INSTRUMENT OF INCREASEMENT OF MUNICIPAL FUNCTIONALITY

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Abstract: *Inter municipal cooperation is one of legal and political instruments that facilitates the process of decentralization considering that inter-municipal co-operating directly affects the capacity growth of partner municipalities for providing more quality public services to the citizens. Inter municipal cooperation presents more valuable instrument for overcoming the lack of financial and human resources in terms of providing of local public services. Legal aspects have been researched as well as the positive international experiences, but the focus has been on Republic of Macedonia and the already existing conditions and the ones to be established in order this process gives positive results. First experiences of IMC are positive and the Republic of Macedonia is the region's leader in this field.*

Key words: *Inter, municipal, cooperation, municipality, finance, obstacle.*

INTRODUCTION

The symmetric model of decentralization of central power in the Republic of Macedonia, beginning after Ohrid Framework Agreement, particularly after the year 2005, resulted with the creation of municipalities with different recourses and capacities which are required to implement the same competences. Since the first years of implementation of decentralization it became obvious that not all municipalities organized in this way, will be benefit from this process and create preconditions for better lives of the citizens by providing stable and local development. Since the year 2006 onwards, the efforts of central government are evident for putting on service the units of alternative local governing mechanisms for implementing competences and local services that traditionally were not applicable in our country.

Since the independence of the Republic of Macedonia, municipalities have enjoyed the right of voluntary inter-municipal co-operation, however this mechanism has never found a wider application as happened after the year 2005 with the beginning of centralization particularly after the year 2009 when the parliament of RM passed a particular law for inter- municipal co-operation. In general, measuring trends of the process of decentralization in the Republic of Macedonia so far are positive, considering the increased capacity of local administrations and the emphasized increase of the total revenue that govern municipalities.

I. The concept of inter municipal co-operation

According to the existent literature numerous definition were found about inter-municipal cooperation. Thus different organizations, academic institutions, law practitioners give definitions of IMC which in many cases are different in shapes and in other cases in concept.

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Many authors consider that in order to understand better the inter-municipal cooperation, initially is required to identify the elements of IMC and then be defined as the same concept. So, which are the main elements that characterize the IMC?

Typical features of IMC (though not the only) can be enumerated as follows:

- develops between two or more local governments units [1]
- based on mutual interests
- concerns one or more legislative functions
- it is mainly voluntary rather than imposed by law
- includes division of roles and responsibilities
- includes division of risk, control and benefits
- flexible and dynamic-responding to changes in the district and over time develops its form
- it does not mean a complete transfer of municipal powers-municipal governments hold at least indirect control over decisions and services which are the result of cooperation.

In the following we will present two definitions which in one or another form in itself incorporate most of the above characteristics. Thus, LGI, UNDP and EC define the inter-municipal co-operation as “relationship between two or more local authorities (eg. entities in the first level of territorial administration) that have legal status endowed with the powers, authority and resources in accordance with European Chart of Local Self-Government. Whereas the European Committee for Local and regional Democracy, defines IMC as ”a partnership that includes a number of local authorities or municipalities, in close proximity to each-other that join forces to work together on development and management of public services, facilities and infrastructure or to offer services to respond the needs of their users for local developments”.

In a country, the definition mainly depends on the concept accepted by the IMC. Unlike other European countries which define IMC as partnership between two or more local government units of the same level, there are other experiences to which this concept is broader. Such an example shows Canada which within the core elements for defining IMC includes cooperation between different levels of local government.

1. Forms of inter-municipal co-operation

International experiences testify for a large number of forms of inter-municipal co-operation which differ significantly between them. However, analysis of specific characteristics of IMC forms at least enables its groupings from different aspects. There are three most common groups of IMC forms encountered in the literature which deals with this area and that:

- IMC- less formalized
- IMC-as functional “enterprise” and
- IMC-as integrated model of territorial cooperation



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Also, within the frames of these groups there have been identified sub-groups or prevalent widespread forms of IMC. Most typical forms of the first grouping are informal cooperation and the contractual one or ones upon agreement.

In practice, informal co-operation appears to be very important, especially since it is in most cases the first step towards establishing formal co-operation to a more institutionalized form. Such partnerships appear as a result of good relations between representative bodies or municipal administration of two or more neighboring municipalities to overcome everyday problems. "These forms do not require legal basis because the same will not result in the issuance of binding decisions or the management public services. They do not end with legal formal decisions but with non-binding agreements.[1]

However the importance of these partnerships should not be underestimated because in itself incorporate more features that help to further advancement of the partnership. Contractual co-operation or upon agreement can also be treated as less formalized form of IMC. The same can be determined by signed agreements of mayors of municipalities on the basis of decisions brought by the municipal councils. Forms of IMC as functional "enterprise" can be realized through establishment of an "entity" separate from involved municipalities or more precisely through various organizations under private law, business enterprises and various public enterprises. Legal systems of different countries offer the possibility for establishing non-governmental entities by legal entities also involving the municipalities. Depending on the legal settings this form is used somewhere more and somewhere less, however, we encounter experiences where these forms are not applicable because municipalities are not entitled to establish such entities." This model is suitable for non-administrative functions: cultural events (festivals), local development agencies, touristic offices, cross-border co-operations, sport facilities, juvenile homes or pensioners' homes etc.[1]

Formation of business enterprise with participation of local government units is a common practice in Western Europe countries. As in the case of non-governmental entities, in the case of business "enterprises" prerequisite for their establishment is the legal possibility municipalities to be founders of these enterprises. In practice in such partnerships, municipalities have the role of shareholders. This form of IMC more frequently occurs in the field performance of the utilities under the jurisdiction of municipalities. "In France this is called "mixed economy" because it brings together both public and private shareholders, it is a Limited Company with at least 15% of the capital in private hands and most of at least 50.1% in public hands. About 1200 companies such as these exist.[2]" The main advantage of this form of IMC is the possibility to accumulate a large number of users of a certain service which in certain cases are prerequisites for private capital investments.

More institutionalized inter-municipal co-operation we encounter at the integrated territorial forms of co-operation. Within this partnership, municipalities decide whether one or more competences or local "politics" in their territory will be implemented by an inter-municipal entity which is established by partner municipalities. Competences that apply through this cooperation can be established by law or by the statute of entity itself. In France, these entities are authorized to determine local taxes which represent the main source of their founding.

Development of versatile of these entities has led certain authors to conclude that the same already present particular level of local government in countries where they apply. By elaboration of various forms of partnership it is obvious that municipalities have more forms available which in certain cases can lead to more sustainable benefits from cooperation.

However, not all of the above forms are present in each country, and not all municipalities can benefit from the same. Different systems of local government also incorporate various concepts of IMC.

2. Financing of inter municipal cooperation

Selection and implementation of the financing form represents one of the key elements of an inter municipality partnership. The importance of funding in the field of cooperation is even greater when it is known that in one hand the same is a condition for a successful operation of the partnership and on the other hand it presents the goal of the cooperation which is the saving or the implementation of municipality powers at the lowest possible cost. Inter municipality partnership funding can be analyzed from more aspects such as: what is the source of the finance, what is the purpose, the legal form of funding, areas in which cooperation is implemented etc. The paper will continue with presenting some of the abovementioned aspects.

From the aspect of the finance sources, the European experience (and the experience of the region) teaches us the different forms to finance the funding of inter municipality cooperation. The functioning of the FIC is usually financed by the municipality budget included in the partnership, even though in many cases there are situations when the local government or donating organizations are the ones who finance it.

Depending on the finance sources of the FIC, we can identify the reason why the cooperation is financed. So, the local government usually finances inter municipality partnerships who intend to stimulate the FIC, the stimulation of the partnerships in areas where the FIC is mandatory, supporting the partnerships which apply the local government's priorities, etc. " In western Europe, the founding and functioning of the inter municipality cooperation often is subsidized by the central government. The inter municipality cooperation often has a privileging approach to the grants financed by the central government. The legal form according to the public right has a higher reliability to attract such subsidies and grants. The most important reasons why the municipalities decide to finance inter municipality cooperation are: generating savings while applying the competencies of municipalities, offering qualitative local services, the professionalization of the municipality administration, having the conditions to use the outer potential sources for which the municipalities do not qualify individually, etc. the promotion of the concept of good governing, supporting the decentralization processes, protecting the existing territorial organization, protecting the local democracy and autonomy, facing occurrences that go beyond the municipality limits, strengthening the transparency and fighting the negative occurrences as a general functioning of the municipalities , in many cases these appear as an intention to finance the FIC by the donating organizations [3].

The financing form is totally determined by the sphere nature and the finance sources on which the cooperation is set. In cases when the cooperation is financed by the municipalities themselves "the certain kind of services such as the municipality services are financed by the compensation of the users. Permitting and giving licenses are also financed by compensation. The others are financed by taxes, no matter whether those are local or national taxes which come to the municipality by intergovernmental transfers (e.g. for the delegated responsibilities)[4]"

Nowadays, at local level one of the most advanced forms of financing cooperations is the possibility to determine local taxes by the common inter municipality staff through which the partnership is implemented (as in France, etc.) In cases when the cooperation is financed by the local government, the financial stimulations, grants, co-finance etc. more often they appear as legal instruments to implement partnerships.

3. Benefits of inter municipality cooperation

The potential benefits which are generated by the functioning of the inter municipality cooperation, presents the main aim for all the relevant factors to participate in such an engagement. But, what are the main benefits, and of what nature are those? There are numerous benefits which are reported by the implementation of FIC, and they dominate, depending on the aim and the sphere where the concept is being used. We will continue to elaborate the three groups of the main benefit of CIF and those are the following

- Economical benefits
- Benefits from the implementation of the local competencies and from the improvement of the quality of the services offered, and
- Benefits from the coherent functioning of the local government's units.

-Economical Benefits – As already stated earlier in this paper, in most of the cases, the economical benefits are the main motive which leads the municipalities to take part in partnerships with other municipalities. The long experience of partnerships has proven that implementing municipality competencies this way generates savings and economical benefits, which can later be used to finance other priority activities.

-Benefits from the implementation of the local competencies and from the improvement of the quality of the services offered – In certain cases, the inter municipality cooperation presents the only opportunity that a municipality has to apply its competencies. Not applying the local competencies may be because of different reasons, but, as the most common ones are the lack of human and finance resources, the lack of space and technical capacities, the lack of knowledge and experience, going beyond the municipality limits because of a certain problem, etc. In this way, only united, two or more municipalities can face the challenges and apply the competencies which they cannot apply individually.

Benefits from the coherent functioning of the local government's units. – The specific nature of the certain problems with which the municipalities are faced predetermines the need for an organized intervention of the units of local government which belong to a wider territorial space. The living environment problems, the inter municipality transport, unemployment, regional development, are some areas where the problem does not lie only at the municipality administration, but the same affect a wider territory in general. The unique answer of some municipalities to such occurrences enables the inhabitants of the different municipalities (especially the neighboring ones) to have same access to the common problems.

4. The obstacles of inter municipality cooperation

The presentation of the concept of the inter municipality cooperation gives the impression that all this process can develop in a positive atmosphere, and which always gives positive results. However, not always are the initiatives, or the functioning of the cooperation without obstacles: because of the different viewpoints the obstacles presented are: “The negative experiences from previous inter municipality cooperation's that have left deep tracks, old

municipality quarrels, vying among the municipalities, doubts, political and ethnical prejudice.” Besides this, the differences among the municipalities appear as an obstacle for initiatives or for the functioning of the cooperation. The following obstacles are as such: different municipality priorities, differences in resources and capacities, differences in needs and aims to set the FIC etc. As far as resistance to set the CIF and its functioning are concerned, the same might be as a result of all the parties involved. The best answer to eliminate the potential resistance might be the beforehand presentation with the FIC concept and the general transparency of an initiative[5].

5. European and regional experiences of inter municipal cooperation

The literature which deals with presentation and functioning of local government clearly informs us that municipal cooperation (whether formal or informal) is known and used centuries in carrying out the competencies of municipalities. However, to reach a current level of executive organization, reform and "experimentation" many of inter municipal cooperation concepts are implemented.

Today, within the present EU countries there are concepts of cooperation, which differ among themselves according to the local government system and specifications of the respective/relevant countries. Differences can be of different nature, but mainly have to do with legislation, financing, inter municipal cooperation formats, way of placing, etc. For the aspect of legislation that regulates the matter of cooperation we find different experiences which can be grouped as follows: specific legislation for inter municipal cooperation, provisions under the material law on local self-government, provisions in material laws, which regulate various areas under the jurisdiction of municipalities, secondary legislation for more detailed regulation of cooperation, etc.[6] Another essential difference related to the concept of cooperation between different European countries represents the fact if the same it is set voluntary or it mandatory. Meanwhile, popular are the experiences of countries which apply voluntary inter municipal cooperation, as well as the mandatory one. Funding as one of the key issues of each partnership can be derived from the budgets of the partner municipalities, from the highest levels of local government, by central government, private sector, international donor organizations etc. Certainly the above listed differences are not the only ones, however, the inter municipality cooperation has points which are the same for all countries, which is found more frequent, when dealing with potential benefits from the establishment and implementation of partnerships.

II. Inter municipal cooperation in Macedonia

Macedonia is counted in the group of countries which have special Law on Inter municipal cooperation since 2009. Before this period, formal cooperation evolve under the provisions of the law on local self-government in 2002, this experience is known for a number of countries in the region and beyond. In the absence of specific legislation on this issue, more specifically, the provisions regulate only the formation of joint administrative bodies as well as the contents of the agreement for determining the rights and obligations of the municipalities involved in the partnership. However, characteristic of this period remains an informal inter municipal cooperation. Considerable number of the municipalities has reported the co-operation between certain municipalities, but only on the basis of verbal agreements of the municipalities involved in the partnership.

Since the adoption of this law, through the coordination of the relevant factors aid such as professional and financial (central government, Municipalities Associations, municipalities and international organizations in the country) exist a number of inter-municipal partnership in various areas under the jurisdiction of municipalities, these partnerships are implemented through various forms of inter municipal cooperation. The analyses in this area show that over 80% of municipalities in the country are involved in various forms of formal inter municipal cooperation.

Achieved results through the implementation of legal provisions have contributed the Republic of Macedonia in this field to be considered the leader in the region and beyond. Experience gained through the years presents a model for replication, which today is "exported" in places like Kosovo, Montenegro, Ukraine, Moldova, etc.

2.1. Definition of inter municipal cooperation.

The Republic of Macedonia is in the group of countries which do not limit the cooperation of municipalities in performing the tasks within their legal competencies. One level system of local government in the Republic of Macedonia determines inter municipal cooperation between local governments units.

Positive legal provisions, define inter municipal cooperation as "cooperation placed between two or more municipalities to conduct more efficiently the municipal competencies verified by law and realizing their interests and common goals.[7]" Also, in terms of law for inter municipal cooperation, " inter municipal cooperation is implied by conducting affairs established by the municipal authority by a municipality on behalf of one or more municipalities under the agreement concluded between municipalities."

2.2. Establishing inter municipal cooperation

Procedure for establishment of inter municipal cooperation is described by positive laws. Clearly are defined bodies which decide on the establishment of cooperation, parties involved in the process, deadlines and necessary acts. Inter municipal cooperation is established by the municipal councils involved, with the proposal of the mayor, council member or initiative of at least 10% of voters from the territory of the municipality that proposed the cooperation. From the analysis of practices for establishing inter municipal cooperation evident is the need of more detailed evaluation of the procedure for placing the cooperation and with certain forms the same to be changed, especially from the aspect of time necessary to make decisions, determination of the competent authorities to establish cooperation, expanding initiators list of possible cooperation (non-governmental organizations and business sector, etc.).

2.3. Forms of inter municipal cooperation

In the Republic of Macedonia, six are formal forms of cooperation which local governments units have for performing common tasks in their competence. These six forms can be divided into two groups (such a division, though not formally, makes positive the legislation), in the first group where cooperation can be realized through:

- a) formation of inter municipal cooperation body:
 - Common body and commission;
 - Common administrative body and

b) Establishment of common public services:

- Public common enterprise;
- Common public institution

and the second group of possible forms, where inter municipal cooperation can be achieved through agreements to:

- Merging of funds, and other materials, and
- Execution of the work specified by a municipality for one or more other municipalities.

The following chart presents graphically the possible forms based on the law for inter municipal cooperation. Characteristic of the first group of inter municipal cooperation presents establishment of a body of "third" municipalities already involved in collaboration, in this case, as a body of "third" is presented the working body, the commission, public enterprise or the public institution.

While, at the second group of possible forms, inter municipal cooperation is accomplished without establishing "third" body and it is within the capacity and resources of the municipalities involved in the collaboration. Although forms of cooperation among themselves are different in more aspects (duration of cooperation, competence for which it is placed the collaboration etc.), the procedure for establishing inter municipal cooperation is the same for all. Also, should be emphasized that certain elements of the procedure for establishing the different forms of inter municipal cooperation are adjusted by provisions of the Law on Local Self-Government as well as with the Law on inter municipal Cooperation (the case of agreement structure for adjusting common rights and obligations between the municipalities which form a common administrative body).

From the four used forms so far in Macedonia, clearly it is seen the dominance of common working body and as well as committee's and so-called "contractual" cooperation as the most preferred by municipalities. In connection with the selection of the most appropriate form of cooperation, analysis prepared by the UNDP writes: "Among the implemented projects, can be seen that common working bodies and commissions are presented as adequate form when the partner municipalities need to implement planning activities." [7]

In Macedonia, the "contractual" form of collaboration has long history of use by municipalities, such cooperation in most cases occurs in the period before the adoption of the Law on inter municipal cooperation. This form mainly appears in collaborations that function in terms of providing public services to citizens within its financial and human resources, no matter if it comes to cooperation between the rural and urban municipalities or cooperation realized only between rural municipalities.

The above process of establishing formal collaborations has not passed without problems of different nature. As identified problems during the establishment are as follows: Unclear division of cases where municipalities decide on establishment of common working body or commission, the determination of these body as a temporary or permanent, change of systematization acts and lack of coordination between central government institutions regarding this issue, low capacity of local administration for preparation of assessment for the need to establish inter municipal cooperation, etc..

From the above mentioned, it is evident that municipal attempts in initial phase of cooperation is to establish forms that do not require more serious intervention in their organizational structure.

2.4 Financing the inter-municipal cooperation

The inter-municipal cooperation is established between the units of the local self-government of Republic of Macedonia is financed by the following sources: the budget of Municipalities, donations and sponsoring of physical and judicial persons as well as other sources of incomes prescribed by law.

The present experience shows that the inter-municipal partnerships are financed or co-financed only by Municipalities and external donations that are present in our country. In this direction is to be distinguished the contribution of UNDP, which since 2006 has supported financially the municipalities in setting different forms of IMC in spheres that are in their charge. Also, in the sphere, but in a greater volume have contributed OSCE, SDS, etc. The financial support of IMC from the central power was conditioned by bringing the decision for determination of activities of larger importance and interest for which could be divided financial means for initiation of IMC.

The financing system represents one of the most important pillars of the persistence of partnerships; therefore we should pay special attention on the financial talks and agreements that are regulating this matter. The well defined financial implications ensure the necessary persistence as well as the potential for setting the confidence between municipalities involved in the partnership as a precondition for general profit from this cooperation.

Bearing in mind the fact that the actual legal prescriptions don't sanction the financing forms between municipalities on field are encountered various experiences that are estimated in certain moments as the most appropriate ones for the established partnerships. In the following part, we shall shortly work out several of the financing forms established between municipalities that are implementing their powers between the inter-municipal cooperation.

The Municipality of Veles that has performed its services for the Municipality of Chashka in the field of tax returns administration has paid for its services in the way that has previously determined the cooperation and then the value of a work hour of the state employees engaged with the cooperation and afterwards from Chashka has withdrawn the amount of financial means that have been a result of the multiplication of the number of hours spent for the needs of municipality which has used the services of the Municipality of Veles with the value determined for an hour of work.

For distinction of Municipality of Veles, the Municipality of Tetova that's has done some work in the field of tax administration for the Municipality of Bervenica has paid its services in the way that has previously determined the value of work done for a taxpayer, so that for its services from the Municipality Bervenica has withdrawn the amount of financial means that have been a result of the multiplication of the general number of taxpayers of municipality Bervenica, with the prices contracted for a taxpayer in a monthly level.

Another well-known form for municipalities is the cooperation financing that like the other two forms, appears in collaborations realized between municipalities of various financial and human capacities (cooperation between urban and rural municipalities) and is a form of "monthly lump-sums" previously negotiated and contracted by them.

As we can see from the above presented examples, the financial was in most cases is predetermined by the capacity of municipalities involved with cooperation. Anyway the financing is also greatly determined by the established form of inter-municipal cooperation. We must stress the fact the most frequent problems that have appeared in the functioning of partnerships between municipalities in certain cases have appeared as a pretext for interruption of cooperation.

1.5. Obstacles for planning, establishing, functioning and evaluations the inter-municipal cooperation.

Plenty of documents and analysis report for Macedonia as a successful experience for inter-municipal cooperation. As we mentioned above, this experience has served as motivation for many other countries to initiate and implement activities of various levels for promotion and incorporation of IMC, in their systems of local self-government. Kosova, Montenegro, Ukraine, Moldova, Albania, etc. are only some of the countries that have taken actions to replicate the experience of R. of Macedonia in the field of IMC.

Nevertheless, we cannot say that the experience of inter-municipal partnerships in our country have not encountered obstacles of various types that have considerably influence in the quality of established collaborations and that affect further in improving their functioning. We have to mention that the obstacles identified for IMC are evident in all the phases of the process since the planning up to the evaluation of partnerships. Therefore, for the purpose of better presentation of the existing obstacles, we will group them in four groups on the basis of the aspect of planning, establishing, functioning, a well as evaluation.

The comprehensive planning represents a precondition for establishing and implementation of stable partnerships, that will generate material and non-material profits for the involved municipalities as well as their inhabitants. By comprehensive planning, initiation, setting, implanting and evaluating IMC on the basis of the adequate methodologies on this field. Form the analysis of a certain number of experiences of IMC, it is clearly obvious that they are initiated with defaults of various nature, such as:

- non-adequate analysis for the need of settling the IMC
- selection of the form of IMC without previous analysis over the most adequate form of convenient partnership;
- non-rational use of existing human resources;
- selection of the financing ways of IMC, that are in course of collaboration have appeared as the principal problems for its continuation.

These situations are bringing us to the conclusion that in most cases partnerships are more established (especially those relying financially on various donators) for realizing short-term profits from obtained grants than for realizing persistent and long-term profits from the more successful functioning of inter-municipal collaboration.

During implementation of the procedure for formal settling inter-municipal collaborations, municipalities also give reports for encountering various obstacles and problems. Although the Ministry for self-government in cooperation with UNDP have developed and published "Summary of proposals and forms for establishment inter-municipal cooperation". The lack of experience as well as the long-lasting procedure have affected in presentation of mistakes of various natures in long procedures, so that in certain cases in order to avoid them, they required initiation of an entirely new procedure. In certain cases, the lack of cooperation of

municipal councils [8] involved in partnership, turned to be reported as impediment for setting a successful collaboration.

From the point of view of inter-municipal functioning as main obstacles and problems appeared: insufficient communication and coordination between partners, non-adequate management of human resources, neglect of commitments of partner municipalities from the side of the involved administration on behalf of the parent municipality, financial problems as a consequence of non-adequate planning of collaboration, differences in giving priority of certain situations, etc. [9]

The above obstacles are not the only ones which municipalities faced during inter-municipal cooperation. Except for the obvious obstacles or the ones that are clearly worked out from the parties involved in partnership, there is also a considerable number of obstacles of which there is no readiness to be discussed in public. The political and ethnic belonging, the previous non-successful experiences, financial obligations between municipalities, etc. are among the main problems within this category and that are greatly affecting on the mechanism of IMC to be much more used from the side of municipalities of R. Macedonia.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Based on the analyses conducted within this study, the following conclusion may be derived: Inter-municipal cooperation directly influences development of capacities of the partner municipalities for provision of quality local public services for citizens;

Inter-municipal cooperation presents useful tool for excess of the lack of financial and human resources toward delivery of local public services;

Technical and financial support from central government highly influences usage of the inter-municipal cooperation by the municipalities especially by the rural municipalities;

Not sufficient knowledge of the concept of IMC and possible benefits of its usage has affected the volume of its usage by the municipalities;

In considerable size, long legal procedure for establishing IMC appears as an obstacle for more frequent usage of this mechanism;

After years of experience, the necessary prerequisites have been originated for initiation of the procedure for changing and amending the Law on inter-municipal cooperation;

Inter-municipal cooperation does not appear to be “taboo – theme” for which one the broader dialogue shall not be initiated among relevant stockholders in this area;

Lack of coordination among central government institutions has affected utilization of the IMC in different areas under the jurisdiction of the local self-government units;

Despite the direct involvement in the area of IMC, the Association of Local Self-Government Units has not played its role in promotion of this concept;

The transfer of successful international and national experiences in area of IMC for continuous stimulation of utilization of this mechanism by the municipalities shall continue in the future as well.

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