Annual Activity Program of the Local/County Council

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Abstract. *Deliberative local public authorities (local and county councils) must work predictably, planned. Predictability of administrative actions leads to predictability of the society's actions, therefore activity planning is a must. Annual Activity Program of the Local Council represents a tool for annual planning of the actions of the deliberative authorities - local and county councils. At the end of the year, for the following year, the local/county council draws up a planning of the draft decisions, on calendar months, which it intends to submit for debate and approval. In order to be introduced in the AAPLC, projects must meet certain requirements of maturity and opportunity.*

Keywords: *local public administration, strategic management, predictability of administration.*

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Background

According to art. 121 of the Romanian Constitution, the public administration authorities, conducting the local autonomy in communes and cities, are the elected local councils and the elected mayors, under the law and according to art. 122, the county council is the authority of the public administration in charge of coordinating the activity of the communal and city councils, in order to provide the public services of county interest.

The administrative code approved by GEO 57/2019 regulates the role and duties of local and county councils. The local council takes the initiative and decides, in accordance with the law, on all issues of local interest, except those that are given by law in the competence of other local or central public administration authorities. The county council is the authority of the local public administration, constituted at county level for the coordination of the activity of the communal, city and municipal councils, in order to ensure provision of public services of county interest.

In the exercise of their duties, the local councils and counties adopt decisions, with absolute or simple majority, as the case may be.

1. Introduction

Deliberative local public authorities (local and county councils) must work predictably, planned. Predictability of administrative actions leads to predictability of the society's actions, therefore activity planning is a must.

Annual Activity Program of the Local Council (AAPLC - Or the Annual Work Plan of the Local / County Council) represents a tool for annual planning of the actions of the deliberative authorities - local and county councils. At the end of the year, for the following year, the local/county council draws up a planning of the draft decisions, on calendar months, which it intends to submit for debate and approval. In order to be introduced in the AAPLC, projects must meet certain requirements of maturity and opportunity.

 AAPLC is a working tool for strategic planning, which can be used by the local public administration in Romania, being built in accordance with the legal provisions governing the organization and functioning of local public authorities.

The process of elaboration, implementation and monitoring of the AAPLC is coordinated by the Secretary General of the ATU.

The Annual Activity Program of the Local Council is made with the help of an IT system intended for its realization, planning and monitoring.

Local councilors, the mayor, the institutions under the coordination of the local county, citizens and non-governmental organizations, other public institutions can introduce draft decisions in the AAPLC.

Objectives of AAPLC elaboration:
- Increasing the predictability of local council actions by planning;
- Ensuring the local council' prioritization of draft decisions;
- Improving the regulatory action among local public authorities by planning and substantiated preparation of draft decisions impacting on the community.

2. Roles assignment in the elaboration and implementation of AAPLC

The **local/county council approves by decision** the application methodology of AAPLC and assumes its use, takes note of the Annual Activity Program of the Local Council prepared based on the proposals, of the monitoring reports and the annual monitoring implementation report of the AAPLC.

The Secretary General of ATU coordinates the process of elaboration, monitoring and evaluation of AAPLC, reviews and comments on the proposals for draft decisions made by the initiators, monitors the correlation between the proposals for draft decisions introduced in AAPLC and the strategic documents of ATU.

He also prepares the Note to inform the local/county council on the elaboration of the AAPLC and the Annual Implementation Report of the AAPLC, which is presented for information to the L/C council. The SG prepares the semi-annual monitoring reports that are presented to the county council for information, as well as regular reports on the evolution of the implementation of the AAPLC and methodologically supports the initiators in the development of the AAPLC and the use of the IT platform.

A technical team consisting of at least two persons with responsibilities in the process of elaboration and implementation of the AAPLC will be appointed in the mayor/president of the county council cabinet, along the SG. The process of elaboration and implementation of AAPLC will be coordinated by the Secretary General.

Local/county councilors and the mayor/president of the county council may comment on the files submitted, as applicable, follow the status of a form and report any inconsistencies to the Secretary General, monitor the implementation process of AAPLC and ensure that draft decisions will be submitted for approval by the deadline proposed.

3. Criteria for the introduction of projects in AAPLC

All draft decisions that concern strategic areas are subject to AAPLC if they originate from:
- Government program
- National strategies
- Regional strategies
- County strategies
- Local development strategy
- CAF plan
- Institutional Strategic Plan
- Procurement strategy
- Urban Mobility Plan
- Energy Efficiency Strategy
- Transposition of European directives
- Infringement proceedings
- Proposal of the initiator with significant impact in the regulated field (for which analyzes/studies/other relevant documents exist or will be elaborated until the presentation in the meeting of the local/county Council).

Therefore, those projects that derive from the above sources with the required information available in order do fill in all sections of the AAPLC file will be introduced.

Areas not taken into account under the AAPLC:
- routine projects, of the type:
  - information;
  - notes or other informative documents;
  - activity reports;
- draft individual decisions;
- projects targeting the:
  - organization and operation of institutions, committees, commissions, etc.
  - appointments and dismissals;
  - setting some data;
  - approval of technical-economic investment indicators;
  - approving the budgets of revenues and expenditures of economic operators and public institutions, their rectification, as well as the norms of expenditures, for the cases provided by law;
  - granting financial and emergency aid;
  - changing the legal regime of some buildings;
  - real estate transfers.

4. AAPLC file format

For all draft decisions entered into the AAPLC database, the initiator fills the form below.

Tabel 1

Heading	Explanations	Format
Number	*Registration number*	Numeric format
Date	*It is automatically generated by the IT support platform*	It is generated automatically Numeric format
Name of the initiator/ institution/ organization	*It is generated automatically, depending on the user who is logged in for local councilors, the mayor and the county council coordination institutions.* New users - citizens, NGOs, other public institutions, will create a user account and enter the name of the initiator.	Text format
Co-initiator	*In cases where the project will be initiated jointly by several persons/institutions, the initiator will have to submit the form and the co-initiator must be identified using the list with multiple options.*	Text format, predefined list
Source	*The source(s) will be selected from the predefined list: Government Program, strategies, strategic plans, etc.*	Text format, predefined list
	Detailing the source *For each selected source there will be a field for details: chapter of the government program, measure, title of the strategy, directive, Fire Fighting and "other sources" (documents with legal force, not declarations of intent) etc.*	Text format, field for details.
Scope of the proposal	*A short description is made to explain the purpose of the proposal, the substantiation, the legal grounds* *The reasons why the project is considered necessary will be briefly described (maximum 250 words). The description will take into account:* *-Description of the current situation* *-Expected changes*	Text format, field for details (maximum 250 words)
Month proposed by the initiator for submission to county council approval	*Choose the year and month from the predefined calendar.*	Numeric format. It will be chosen from the predefined calendar
Estimated month of adoption	*Choose the year and month from the predefined calendar.*	Numeric format. It will be chosen from the predefined calendar
Substantiation	YES/NO will be chosen (there is/there isn't any substantiation/justification document) If YES, the document will be uploaded.	Default, text format
The impact on socio-economy and the environment	YES/NO will be chosen (there is/is no socio-economic impact nor on the environment). **YES button:** *Starting from the goal, the way in which the project influences the business environment, the social environment, the natural environment, the institutional environment, etc. it will be presented.* **NO button** - go to the next field	Default, text format Text format, field for details (maximum 250 words)

Heading	Explanations	Format
The financial impact	YES / NO will be chosen (there is / is no financial impact on the local budget). YES button: *Starting from the scope, the project influences on the local budget will be presented.* NO button - go to the next field	Default, text format Text format, field for details (maximum 250 words)
Date of approval in Local Council	*The field is active only for the ATU SG. Following the monitoring of local council meetings, for each project in AAPLC, the stage will be specified by choosing Yes / No / Rejected* *The month of approval/rejection will be chosen from the predefined calendar.* *After approval, the file is locked - can no longer be modified/edited.*	Numeric format. It will be chosen from the predefined calendar
The title under which it was approved in the local council	*The field is only active for the ATU SG.* *Following the monitoring of the local council meetings, the title with which the project was approved in the local county will be completed, if it differs from the original title. If it is not different, the field may remain blank.*	Text format, field for details
ATU SG remarks - legality	*The heading is active only for the SG of the ATU, who will be able to comment on the legality of the projects introduced in the AAPLC* *Comments are submitted within 15 days of the expiry of the period during which the initiators must submit the projects to the AAPLC*	Text format, field for details
Remarks from other initiators	*The field will contain a predefined list of institutions/initiators and a field for comments.* *In this section, any institution/initiator in the AAPLC can comment on projects submitted by other initiators.* *Comments are submitted within 15 days of the end of the period in which the initiators must submit the projects to the AAPLC.*	Text format, field for details
Initiator remarks response	*The heading will contain a predefined list of initiators and a field for formulating responses to comments made by other initiators.* *Responses to comments are entered for 15 days, after the end of the period in which comments could be made.*	*Text format, field for details*

5. AAPLC monitoring /evaluation process

Following the entry of data in the AAPLC platform, the values of the following indicators are calculated and highlighted by the SG of the ATU:

$I1 =$ **AAPLC project approval rate** = (No. of AAPLC projects that have been approved / adopted by the local council x 100): (No. of projects proposed in AAPLC) [%];

$I2 =$ **Approval rate of AAPLC projects on term** = (No. of AAPLC projects that have been approved /adopted on term by the local council x 100) : (No. of projects proposed in AAPLC) [%];

I3 = **Approval rate of AAPLC projects with delay** = (No. of AAPLC projects that have been approved /adopted with delay by the local council x 100) : (No. of projects proposed in AAPLC) [%];

I4 = **The rate of withdrawal by the initiator of the projects from AAPLC during the local council meetings** = (No. of AAPLC projects that have been withdrawn by the initiator x 100) : (No. of projects proposed in AAPLC) [%];

I5 = **The rate of non-promotion by the initiator of the projects from AAPLC** = Number of projects included in AAPLC, but not subsequently promoted by the initiator x 100) : (No. of projects proposed in AAPLC) [%];

I6 = **The approval rate of projects not included in the AAPLC and which should have been provided in the AAPLC** = (No. of projects not included in the AAPLC and which should have been included in the AAPLC that were approved / adopted by the local council x 100): (No. of projects proposed in the AAPLC) [%];

6. Preparation, elaboration and updating of AAPLC

6.1. Preparation and elaboration of AAPLC

Preparation and development for AAPLC involves:
- Assigning the team responsible for the elaboration and implementation of AAPLC;
- Dissemination within the team of the Methodology for implementing the AAPLC;
- Informing all those involved regarding the start of the AAPLC elaboration process;
- The calendar for the elaboration and uploading of the AAPLC files is communicated to the local councilors, departments and specialized departments within the institution, other institutions, the community;
- The initiators submit the project proposals in order to complete the AAPLC forms;
- The technical team monitors at the level of the institution the implementation process of AAPLC and ensures that the draft normative acts will be submitted for approval within the proposed term.

6.2. AAPLC update

The AAPLC update is carried out at the initiative of the SG of the ATU, in the middle of the year, and follows the steps described above.

6.3. AAPLC presentation form

The Annual Activity Program of the Local Council will be presented for information in the local council/county council meeting, at the beginning of each year.

The table below represents the format in which the AAPLC will be submitted before the local council/county council.

Tabel 2

Initiator	Project title	The month of the submission for approval in the local county meeting	Source	Description

6.4. Monitoring and reporting process

The ATU SG will coordinate the AAPLC monitoring and reporting process. At the beginning of each year, an Implementation Report will be prepared that will present the way in which the AAPLC has been implemented.

The report will contain data on:
- projects from AAPLC that have been approved/adopted by local council;
- projects from AAPLC that were approved/adopted on time by local council;
- projects from AAPLC that were approved/adopted with delay by local council;
- projects from AAPLC that were withdrawn by the initiator in the local council meeting;
- Number of projects included in AAPLC, but not subsequently promoted by the initiator;
- projects not included in the AAPLC and which should have been included in the AAPLC that were approved/adopted by the local council;
- AAPLC projects that have impact studies, approved by local council.
- the situation of the proposals/initiator.

The quarterly progress reports shall be drawn up on 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December of the year and shall include the values of the 6 indicators, including the elements to be taken into account for their calculation within the said deadlines, both cumulatively and for each initiator.

The annual evaluation report shall be drawn up by 31 January of the following year and shall have the following framework structure:

- Introduction;
- General framework – framework analysis for the targeted year;
- The values of the 6 indicators, including the elements that are taken into account for the calculation of these cumulated levels and for each initiator separately;
- Comparative framework analysis with the results of the implementation of the AAPLC from the previous year and with the forecasts for the following year;
- Conclusions and proposals for improvement.

The annual report is presented by the SG of the ATU in a meeting of the local/county council and is presented on the ATU website.

7. AAPLC stages

Table 3

No.	ACTIVITY	CALENDAR - recommended period	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION
1	The SG of the ATU sends to the institutions/initiators the address by which it announces the start of the elaboration of the AAPLC for the following year, the calendar of the elaboration process, etc.	Every October	SG of the ATU
2	Completion and introduction of AAPLC files in the IT platform	Every November	initiators
3	Formulation of observations and answers to the observations formulated in AAPLC	Every November	initiators
4	The local council takes note of the Annual Activity Program of the Local Council prepared based on the proposals submitted	Every December	LC
5	Completion in AAPLC of the date of approval in the local council of the proposed project and completion in AAPLC of the title with which the project was approved in local council (if the title has undergone changes in the adoption process).	Throughout the year	SG of the ATU
6	Preparation of the annual report of AAPLC (for the previous year) and presentation in the local council meeting	January every year	SG of the ATU
7	Quarterly progress reports for the ongoing AAPLC	April, July, October	SG of the ATU
8	Notice of initiation of the reopening of the AAPLC for updating	June of each year	SG of the ATU
9	AAPLC update for the current year	June of each year	
10	Formulation of comments and replies to comments submitted in AAPLC for the new / updated files	June of each year	

8. IT tool support for the operationalization of the AAPLC methodology

8.1. General description

A AAPLC computer application can be used to operationalize AAPLC.

The AAPLC application includes:
- introduction of initiatives;
- comments / remarks on the initiatives entered;
- updating initiatives;
- publishing the initiative in the Annual Activity Program of the Local Council;
- monitoring initiatives from the Annual Activity Program of the Local Council.

The platform is developed in web technology, with facilities that allow an efficient monitoring, in real time, of the implementation stage of AAPLC, as well as a complex reporting on the supporting documents required in the process of elaboration and adoption of an initiative.

8.2. The main functionalities developed within the AAPLC platform consist of:
- elaboration and easy retrieval of the proposals (associated documents/calendar) which are introduced in the Annual Activity Program of the Local Council;
- monitoring the state of the proposals in the Annual Activity Program of the Local Council by versions management;
- specific and complex reporting (pre-arranged and ad-hoc reports);
- access control system for centralized reports according to the predefined roles in the AAPLC workflow;
- data and reports from the platform are available in various formats that allow reuse and redistribution, including combination with other data sets;
- sending notifications to users with reference to the status of a proposal initiated, the notification is send both on the platform and by e-mail. Notifications sent via the e-mail service are limited to important events regarding actions specific to the proposals initiated (comments, publication, etc.) and to the stage of a AAPLC session (warnings about the stage of a AAPLC session - opening/comments/ closing, etc.).

References

Romanian Constitution

Romanian Administrative Code