

Metamorphosis Foundation

State Officials Agency

Telephone survey on:

**ASSESSMENT OF THE MANNER OF APPLYING
FOR POSITIONS OF CIVIL SERVANTS**

May - June 2007

INTRODUCTION

This part of the report contains a description of the methodology and procedure used in conducting the telephone survey on the assessment of the manner of applying for positions of civil servants.

The telephone interview questionnaire was construed of a set of questions related to the advantages and disadvantages of submitting job applications on-line.

The answers to the questions provide relevant information on the transparency of the system, the applicants' confidence in the system, as well as the problems in any of the stages of using the system – from the submission of applications to being tested.

Two trained interviewers, telephone operators, were engaged for the purposes of the survey.

FIELD WORK

The Metamorphosis Foundation conducted a telephone survey of applicants for positions of civil servants in the period between 18 – 22 May 2007.

SAMPLE SIZE AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The planned and realized non-representative sample included **108** respondents, applicants for positions of civil servants. The survey was conducted on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia. The respondents were chosen on random basis from the lists of candidates who had applied for a position with the Civil Servants Agency of the Republic of Macedonia.

In terms of the gender of the respondents who participated in the survey, their distribution was that of 65 women and 43 men.

PROCESSING OF DATA

The processing and analysis of the data included the use of the professional software package SPSS 9 for Windows. SPSS for Windows, Microsoft OFFICE for Windows (Word) and Internet Explorer (HTML format) were used to compose the report and the tables.

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

Of the total number of respondents (108) who took part in the telephone survey, 54 (50%) reported they had found out about the vacant position of a state official by regular checks of the Web site of the Civil Servants Agency. This fact is a confirmation of the usefulness of the existence of the Internet job application possibility provided by the Civil Servants Agency, as well as of the high penetration of the use of Internet among the population in the Republic of Macedonia in general, despite the official figures. The second half (45%) of the respondents found out about the open possibility for applying for a position through an add in the daily papers. Only 5% of the respondents learned about the vacant position from their friends.

As one of the two options to apply for the position, Internet was chosen by a total of 95 applicants, i.e. by 88% of the population surveyed.

The highest percentage (44.3%) of the total number of those who applied via the Internet learned about the existence of the on-line system on the Internet, followed by 22.7% of those who read about it in the job advertisement, 17.5% read about it in the daily press, and 15.5% were told that the system exists by their friends. In most of the cases (53.6%), the applications were submitted from the applicants' homes, while 23.7% of the respondents did so from Internet cafes, 12.4% from work, and 7.2% from their friends' homes.

An insignificant number of 4 respondents out of the total of 108 came across difficulties in using the application system, with two of them having difficulties in locating the specific position and one each in opening the Web site and submitting the application. All applicants who had problems were able to resolve it with the assistance of their friends.

The percentage of 'yes' (43.3%) and 'no' (56.7%) answers to the question about the use of test simulations when applying was approximately equal. Namely, 90.5% of those who gave affirmative answers believe that the simulation was useful, and 39.8% of them thought the testing as easy from a technical aspect (this is an aggregate of the 'very easy' and 'easy' answers). 5.6% of the respondents had difficulties. The skepticism among respondents, evident in the replies to the questions related to the trust in the results of the testing is at a low level, amounting to only 5.6%. All negative answers refer to the mistrust in the system. The remaining percentage of 39.8% of positive answers demonstrates the confidence of applicants in the results of the on-line testing. The high percentage of positive answers (69.4%) related to the belief that the applications were objectively assessed may also be added to this aspect of confidence. 10.2% of the respondents reported lack of trust in the assessment system, whereas 20.4% had no position on the objectivity of the assessment of the applications.

On the other hand, those who did not use the test simulation when they applied did so because they had no information at all that there is such a simulation (half of the answers), while one half of the answers is due to the lack of interest in being subjected to testing. It is exactly this percentage of respondents which does not include those who did not use the test simulation when applying who may not assess the simplicity of the test from a technological point of view.

The fact that 94.7% of all respondents (who applied via the Internet) answered that it is easy to use (aggregate of the answers 'very easy' and 'easy') clearly shows that the on-line application system is welcome by the respondents. Only 5.2% reported they had some difficulties in using the system.

The possibility to submit the application documents by mail was used by only 10% of the respondents. The most frequently stated reason by them for not applying on-line was their lack of knowledge as to how to do so or their general lack of trust in the Internet.

Only 10% of the respondents submitted the application documents by mail. Most of them reported they did not apply on-line due to their lack of knowledge how to do so or due to their lack of trust in the Internet in general.

The generalized question that applies to all respondents about their previous experience in applying for a position of civil servants again illustrates a division into those who have previous experience (43.5%) and those applying for such a position for the first time (56.6%).

63.8% of the respondents who are in a position to make a comparison and have previous experience in applying for positions of civil servants stated they find the new system more transparent. 10.6% stated they found the system same as the previous one, while 8.5% of the respondents with previous experience said it is less transparent. 17% of the respondents answered that they are not in a position to make any comparison.

Out of the total of 49 respondents who registered themselves in the system following the testing, only 21 (42.9%) did so successfully. 28 respondents (57.1%) came across difficulties, with the answers "I did not know I could do it" (19 respondents) and "I do not know how" (5 respondents) being the most frequent ones. As regards the question related to any technical problems (in any stage of using the process from applying to being tested), almost all (98%) of the respondents thought that the difficulties are, after all, an unavoidable part of the on-line application system.

The resistance to apply for a position (for which they meet the criteria) on-line again is present in the case of only 6 cases of respondents (5.6%) out of the total 108 respondents. The negative perception of applying for a job via the Internet creates a negative image in the public, although expressed by only a small number of respondents, is still not to be neglected.

To minimize the sources of dissatisfaction and possible creation of a bad image of the on-line application system, it is necessary to strengthen even more the pillars of trust of the public, assuring the latter that this manner of applying is just as reliable as the others.

What the respondents pointed to as prime benefits of the Civil Servants Agency's system for applying for jobs via the on-line system is the speed and simplicity of the application procedure. The other reasons stated by the respondents as benefits from the system are its availability at all times, the possibility to check numerous issues, its comprehensiveness, organization, regularity, objectivity, savings on mailing charges, etc.

GENERAL FREQUENCIES

Q1 How did you find out about the position?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 By regular checks on the Web site: www.prijava.ads.gov.mk	54	50.0	50.0	50.0
	2 From an add in the paper	49	45.4	45.4	95.4
	3 From a friend	5	4.6	4.6	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

Q2 How did you apply?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Via the Internet	95	88.0	88.0	88.0
	2 By mail	11	10.2	10.2	98.1
	3 Both via the Internet and by mail	2	1.9	1.9	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

Q3 How did you find out about the on-line system?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 On-line	43	39.8	44.3	44.3
	3 From newspaper articles	17	15.7	17.5	61.9
	4 From the add in the paper	22	20.4	22.7	84.5
	5 From a friend	15	13.9	15.5	100.0
	Total	97	89.8	100.0	
Missing	System	11	10.2		
Total		108	100.0		

Q4 Why did you decide not to apply via the Internet?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>2 I do not trust the Internet</i>	4	3.7	36.4	36.4
	<i>3 I do not have access to the Internet</i>	2	1.9	18.2	54.5
	<i>4 I knew I could, but did not know how</i>	4	3.7	36.4	90.9
	<i>5 Did not know the password</i>	1	.9	9.1	100.0
	Total	11	10.2	100.0	
Missing	System	97	89.8		
Total		108	100.0		

Q5 Where did you apply from?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>1 Home</i>	52	48.1	53.6	53.6
	<i>2 Work</i>	12	11.1	12.4	66.0
	<i>3 Internet café</i>	23	21.3	23.7	89.7
	<i>4 Friend's place</i>	7	6.5	7.2	96.9
	<i>6 A foundation</i>	1	.9	1.0	97.9
	<i>7 The municipality</i>	1	.9	1.0	99.0
	<i>8 NGOs resource center</i>	1	.9	1.0	100.0
	Total	97	89.8	100.0	
Missing	System	11	10.2		
Total		108	100.0		

Q6 Did you need assistance to use the system?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>1 No</i>	93	86.1	95.9	95.9
	<i>2 Yes</i>	4	3.7	4.1	100.0
	Total	97	89.8	100.0	
Missing	System	11	10.2		
Total		108	100.0		

Q7 Which part of the process did you need assistance with?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Opening the Web site	1	.9	25.0	25.0
	2 Finding a specific opening	2	1.9	50.0	75.0
	4 Submitting the application	1	.9	25.0	100.0
	Total	4	3.7	100.0	
Missing	System	104	96.3		
Total		108	100.0		

Q8 How did you solve the problem?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4 A friend helped me	4	3.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	104	96.3		
Total		108	100.0		

Q9 Did you use the test simulation?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Yes	42	38.9	43.3	43.3
	2 No	55	50.9	56.7	100.0
	Total	97	89.8	100.0	
Missing	System	11	10.2		
Total		108	100.0		

Q10 What is your opinion of it (the application)?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 It was useful	38	35.2	90.5	90.5
	2 It was not useful	4	3.7	9.5	100.0
	Total	42	38.9	100.0	
Missing	System	66	61.1		
Total		108	100.0		

Q11 Why did you not use the simulation?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>1 Did not know there was such a thing</i>	27	25.0	49.1	49.1
	<i>2 Was not interested</i>	28	25.9	50.9	100.0
	Total	55	50.9	100.0	
Missing	System	53	49.1		
Total		108	100.0		

Q12 According to you, is it easy to use the on-line application system?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>1 Very easy</i>	33	30.6	34.0	34.0
	<i>2 Easy</i>	59	54.6	60.8	94.8
	<i>3 Somewhat difficult</i>	5	4.6	5.2	100.0
	Total	97	89.8	100.0	
Missing	System	11	10.2		
Total		108	100.0		

Q13 Have you applied for a position of a civil servant previously?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>1 No</i>	61	56.5	56.5	56.5
	<i>2 Yes</i>	47	43.5	43.5	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

Q14 Do you think this system is more transparent?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>1 Yes</i>	30	27.8	63.8	63.8
	<i>2 Same as the previous one</i>	5	4.6	10.6	74.5
	<i>3 Less transparent</i>	4	3.7	8.5	83.0
	<i>9 No comment</i>	8	7.4	17.0	100.0
	Total	47	43.5	100.0	
Missing	System	61	56.5		
Total		108	100.0		

Q15 Was the test easy from a technical point of view?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>1 Very easy</i>	9	8.3	8.3	8.3
	<i>2 Easy</i>	34	31.5	31.5	39.8
	<i>3 Somewhat difficult</i>	4	3.7	3.7	43.5
	<i>4 Difficult</i>	2	1.9	1.9	45.4
	<i>5 Did not take the test</i>	54	50.0	50.0	95.4
	<i>9 No comment</i>	5	4.6	4.6	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

Q16 Do you believe the results?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>1 Yes</i>	43	39.8	39.8	39.8
	<i>2 No</i>	6	5.6	5.6	45.4
	<i>3 Did not take the test</i>	54	50.0	50.0	95.4
	<i>9 No comment</i>	5	4.6	4.6	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

Q17 Why do you not believe the results?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 Do not believe in the system	6	5.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	102	94.4		
Total		108	100.0		

Q18 Did you register in the system following the test?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Yes	21	19.4	42.9	42.9
	2 No	28	25.9	57.1	100.0
	Total	49	45.4	100.0	
Missing	System	59	54.6		
Total		108	100.0		

Q19 Why did you not register in the system after the test?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Did not know I could do it	19	17.6	67.9	67.9
	2 Do not know how	5	4.6	17.9	85.7
	3 Do not have permanent Internet access	1	.9	3.6	89.3
	4 Not interested	3	2.8	10.7	100.0
	Total	28	25.9	100.0	
Missing	System	80	74.1		
Total		108	100.0		

Q20 Did you have any technical problems in any stage of using the system, from applying to being tested?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 No	47	43.5	95.9	95.9
	2 Yes	1	.9	2.0	98.0
	4 The content you upload is sometimes erased from the site	1	.9	2.0	100.0
	Total	49	45.4	100.0	
Missing	System	59	54.6		
Total		108	100.0		

Q21 If you were to apply again for a position for which you are eligible, how would you do it?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Over the Internet	99	91.7	91.7	91.7
	2 By mail	4	3.7	3.7	95.4
	3 In person	2	1.9	1.9	97.2
	4 Makes no difference	3	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

Q22 Do you think that your application was objectively evaluated?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Yes	75	69.4	69.4	69.4
	2 No	11	10.2	10.2	79.6
	9 Do not know	22	20.4	20.4	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

Q23 What was the thing you liked most about the system?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>1 Its speed</i>	29	26.9	26.9	26.9
	<i>2 Its availability at all times</i>	5	4.6	4.6	31.5
	<i>3 Many things may be checked/seen</i>	2	1.9	1.9	33.3
	<i>4 No comment</i>	22	20.4	20.4	53.7
	<i>5 It is easy to apply, I do not have to go to the post office</i>	22	20.4	20.4	74.1
	<i>6 It is easier to understand</i>	6	5.6	5.6	79.6
	<i>7 Its organization</i>	6	5.6	5.6	85.2
	<i>8 The test is good</i>	4	3.7	3.7	88.9
	<i>9 Everything is OK</i>	5	4.6	4.6	93.5
	<i>10 It is regular and objective</i>	2	1.9	1.9	95.4
	<i>11 You can see how you did</i>	1	.9	.9	96.3
	<i>12 No mailing costs</i>	1	.9	.9	97.2
	<i>13 It is better to do it electronically</i>	2	1.9	1.9	99.1
	<i>14 More choice</i>	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

Q24 What was the thing you liked least about the system?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<i>1 It is not reliable</i>	2	1.9	1.9	1.9
	<i>2 No comment</i>	69	63.9	63.9	65.7
	<i>3 No guarantee that the application reached the destination</i>	2	1.9	1.9	67.6
	<i>4 No objections</i>	7	6.5	6.5	74.1
	<i>5 Problems with the site</i>	6	5.6	5.6	79.6
	<i>6 It takes time, it is slow</i>	3	2.8	2.8	82.4
	<i>7 Insufficient and incorrect information on the site</i>	6	5.6	5.6	88.0
	<i>8 Not easy to find a new add on-line</i>	2	1.9	1.9	89.8
	<i>9 The flow of the selection process</i>	3	2.8	2.8	92.6
	<i>10 The results are not on the Internet, long time before you receive a reply</i>	4	3.7	3.7	96.3
	<i>11 There should be more possibilities for open questions</i>	1	.9	.9	97.2
	<i>12 The final selection</i>	1	.9	.9	98.1
	<i>13 The interview</i>	1	.9	.9	99.1
	<i>14 No possibility to attach additional documents to the application form</i>	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	