

How COVID-19 Forced the Officials Councils' of Slovenia to Select Highest State Officials Only Online

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Abstract

The Official's Council (OC) of Slovenia plays a vital part in selection process of all public officials, as it sets the standards of professional qualifications, the selection criteria and the methods of qualification testing. It also appoints Special Competition Commissions (SCC) for the selection procedure in the special open competitions for the highest official positions, namely directors general, secretaries general, heads of ministries, heads of government services and heads of administrative units. As COVID-19 stroke and shook all our lives since March 2020, majority of countries, including Slovenia, imposed strict restrictions, so the selection process for the highest officials' positions moved online. A survey study was conducted, which focused on the members of the OC as they also act as chairmen for all SCCs, how moving online affected the selection process. The findings revealed that the majority of the OC's members didn't use the online conferencing tools before COVID-19, but they are now using it because of COVID-19 limitations to meet face-to-face. Also, half of them would be open to possibility to keep online interviews also post-COVID-19. But none of them felt it was easier to evaluate candidate at online interview, quite contrary – majority said it was harder, mainly because of the inability to fully assess the candidates, also their body language and there is an absence of personal contact. They also expressed the privacy concerns and technical complexity / issues as regards online interviews. This article also exposes further use of modern technology in the HR selection process.

Keywords: Officials' Council, highest state officials, HR selection process, online interview, AI-driven tools, predictive analytics, Slovenia