EVALUATION OF

GOOD GOVERNANCE IN THE UNITS OF LOCAL-SELF GOVERNMENT
IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA
THROUGH THE OPENNESS INDEX

MEASUREMENT FOR 2021

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Skopje, August 2021

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

The Metamorphosis Foundation, with the support of USAID's Civic Engagement Project, evaluated the state of good governance of the local self-government units (LSGUs) in the Republic of North Macedonia for 2021. The evaluation is the result of a survey based on the Openness Index, which aims to determine the extent to which the principles of good governance are respected.

The Openness Index is a methodology for evaluating the performance of LSGUs which is based on the already developed Index for measuring the openness of local self-government units in the region of the six non-EU countries in Southeast Europe (SEE6). The Index takes into account the differences and specifics of each of the countries, both in terms of legal obligations for LSGUs and in terms of practices. The methodology was revised at the beginning of 2021 to adjust the components of the Index (categories, sub-categories, indicators, tools) to enable its full applicability and relevance for assessing the openness of LSGUs in the Republic of North Macedonia (RNM).

This report provides an analysis of the work of the local self-government units in the Republic of North Macedonia in terms of the principles of transparency, accessibility, awareness and integrity. Additionally, LSGUs were monitored according to a common domain present in all four principles - open data. Based on the assessment, recommendations are given for improving the work of the local self-government units in the categories covered by the research.

2. METHODOLOGY

The Openness Index evaluates local government performance in the area of good governance by focusing on four principles: (1) transparency, (2) awareness, (3) accessibility and (4) integrity with a common domain present in all four principles - open data.

The Openness Index is a practical tool for measuring the overall openness of LSGUs which:

▶ provides a detailed overview of all aspects related to the openness of each LSGU,

▶ enables comparability between LSGUs to encourage mutual learning and sharing best practices,

▶ creates motivation in the LSGU for continuous improvement and innovation,

▶ is accessible and understandable for the citizens to have insight into the openness of their municipality, as one of the key criteria for evaluating the performance and success.

The indicators are organized into 4 categories and 9 sub-categories. The four categories correspond to the four principles of open government: transparency, awareness, accessibility and integrity. In addition, the index contains two subcategories - municipal council and public enterprises, which allows assessing the openness of the municipality when it comes specifically to the work of the council or public enterprises.

The category of **transparency** refers to the policies, activities and measures that the municipality undertakes to inform its citizens about its work. Starting from the position that transparency is the basis for the openness of municipalities, this category in the Index contains the largest number of indicators, including financial transparency as one of the most important aspects of the work of municipalities.

The category of **awareness** refers to the quality of planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation of policies implemented by institutions. It implies the predictability of the implementation of the public interest through public policies in the local self-government unit. This category reviews the process of creating public policies in the municipality, the preparation and adoption of strategic documents, action plans, as well as the development of a plan and tools for monitoring and evaluation in the implementation of sectoral competencies that the municipality has.

The **accessibility** category refers to how LSGUs communicate and involve the citizens of the municipality in responding to their requests and meeting their needs. Accessibility is related to ensuring and respecting the procedures for free access to public information, improving the accessibility of information

through public debate mechanisms and strengthening the interaction with and the participation of the citizens.

The category of **integrity** within this Index is considered in the function of consistent adherence to ethical values, principles and norms that aim to prioritize the public interest over the private.

Open data is an important aspect of this Index and is considered as a horizontal area. According to the **Open Data Strategy, o**pen data are recognized as an opportunity to improve governance in terms of transparency, openness and accountability at all levels, including local, and can also be a strong impetus for economic and social development in the country. Within the Index, for some of the indicators, how the data are published and their format through the prism of data openness are additionally analyzed. Thus, through this horizontal approach, we strive to assess the commitment of municipalities to meet the requirements of open data.

The elaboration and revision of the Methodology were conducted on a basis of a detailed analysis of the national strategic and legal framework of RNM, international documents, initiatives, standards, recommendations and good practices, research on the perceptions and expectations of RNM citizens, as well as interviews with relevant stakeholders.

The research was conducted by the Metamorphosis Foundation, and in the process of conducting the research were involved 8 local civil society organizations: Agtis - Prilep, Center for Intercultural Dialogue - Kumanovo, Foundation for Local Community Development - Štip, Center for Social Innovation Blink 42- 21 - Skopje, Multikultura - Tetovo, Sky Plus - Strumica, Local Development Agency - Struga and Quantum Prima - Kavadarci.

The research for 2021 covered all 80 municipalities and the City of Skopje.

The research was conducted between 1 June and 15 July 2021. The research methods were the following: (1) monitoring the websites of the municipalities according to defined indicators and (2) questionnaire submitted to the municipalities to confirm the findings obtained from the online monitoring. The methodology takes the official websites of the LSGUs as a basic source for collecting information. The second level of screening for some of the indicators involved the process of preparation and implementation of a questionnaire as a research tool. The questionnaire was conducted electronically and consisted of pre-determined questions and answer options that allow to confirm

or supplement some of the findings obtained by monitoring the websites, as well as to eliminate any follow-up omissions that would be detrimental to the assessment of LSGU for a specific indicator.

The measurement error is +/- 3%. Based on the results of the research, we analyzed key critical points and problems in the field of openness of the municipalities, which we hope will be used to improve their work.

Out of the 80 monitored municipalities and the City of Skopje, only 36 or 44% answered the online questionnaire. It is important to note that in the cases when the municipalities did not submit answered questionnaires, a score of 0 was given for the indicators, i.e. it was assessed as indicators that they were not met. Namely, from the monitored municipalities, 36 (44%) answered the questionnaire, while the remaining 45 (56%) automatically receive 0 for the respective indicators.

Annex 1 gives the overall structure of the Openness Index at the local level.

3. OPENNESS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

3.1. THE STATE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN NORTHERN MACEDONIA

The COVID-19 pandemic that we faced further emphasized the need for fast and efficient work of the authorities, and thus of the local self-government. In such extraordinary conditions, drastic restrictions on the freedom of movement of citizens have shown how important trust and transparency are in the operation of local self-government units.

The 2021 research found that most municipalities do not work hard enough to meet openness standards. The results in the categories indicate that the LSGUs apply low standards for consultation, transparency, monitoring and control in their work. Although in emergencies the reduction of the effectiveness and efficiency of operations in some areas is inevitable, it must still be limited in scope and time to avoid creating a negative perception among citizens of the competence, openness and transparency of LSGUs.

The average result of the local self-government units according to the research through the Openness Index for 2021 is 25%. This is an indication of a low level of openness in the work of local government in the Republic of North Macedonia.

The municipalities have the highest average score for the indicators in the category of transparency - 32%, and the lowest average score in the area of awareness - 13%.

Chart 1. Openness of LSGUs for 2021 according to the principles of the Openness Index
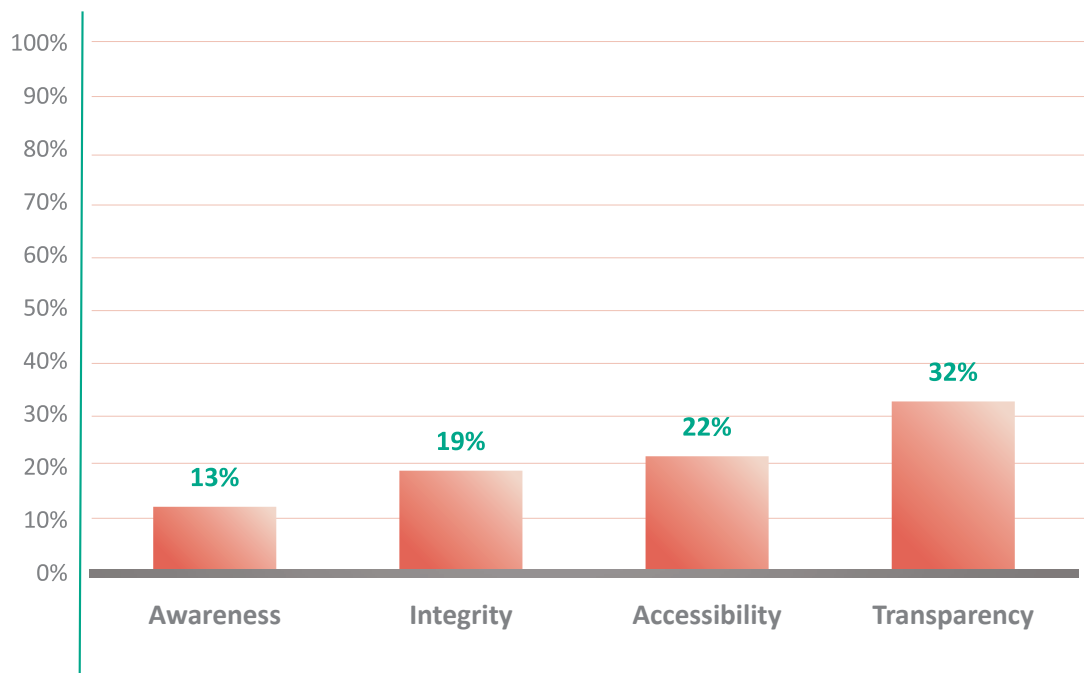
The extremely low result in the field of awareness indicates the poor quality of planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation of policies implemented by the LSGU. This is of particular importance because the implementation of the public interest should primarily be through public policies in the local self-government unit.

CAccording to the Law on Territorial Organization of Local Self-Government, local self-government is territorially organized in 80 municipalities and the city of Skopje, as a separate unit of local self-government. According to our Constitution, the units of local self-government, i.e. the municipalities, are equal in their rights and duties, regardless of their urban or rural character, level of development, spatial and demographic size and other differences and specifics. Hence, in the research, all municipalities are treated equally, regardless of their size, number of employees and the like.

The principles of openness contained in the Openness Index are covered in several laws, bylaws and guidelines to improve the openness of local government institutions and improve the quality of life of citizens.

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The Openness Index showed that the best results in the measurement for 2021 have the municipalities of Ohrid (51%), Vasilevo (48%) and Kočani (48%), while the lowest-ranked is the municipality of Plasnica (3%).

Chart 2. Top 10 ranked LSGUs according to the Openness Index for 2021
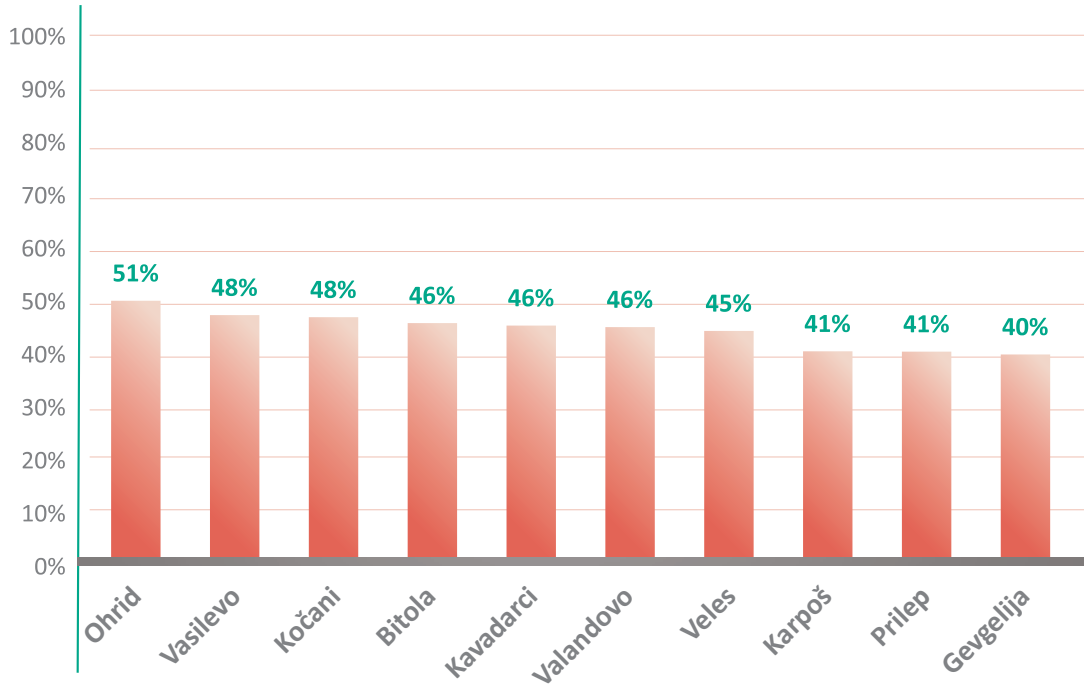
Chart 3. The lowest-ranked LSGUs according to the Openness Index for 2021
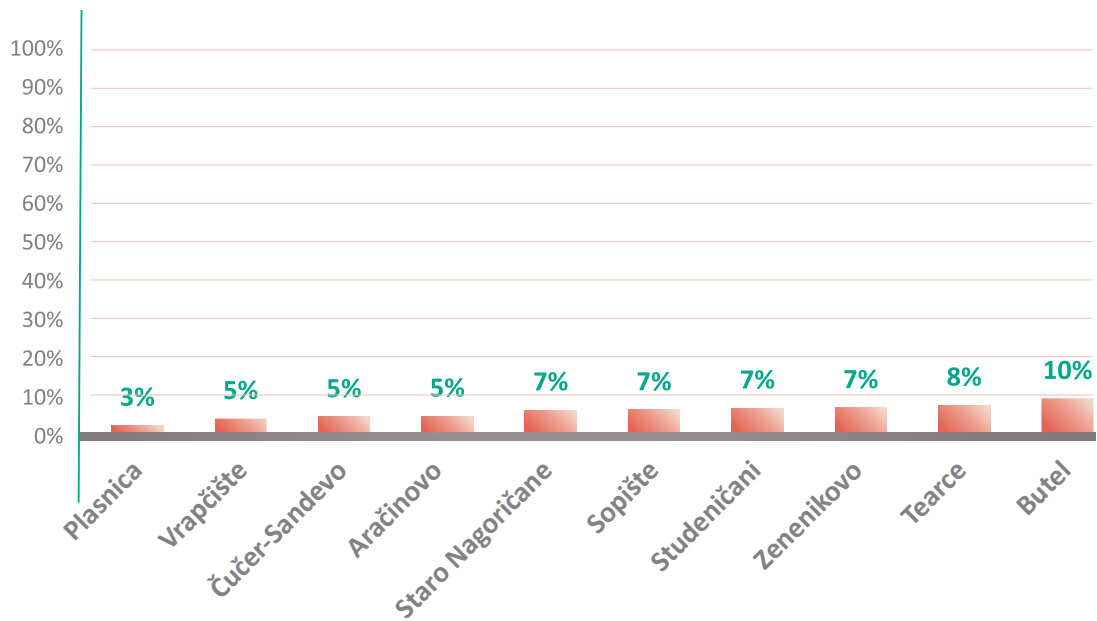
Regarding the planning regions, the research showed that the most open are the municipalities in the Southeast region, with an average openness of 34%, while the least open are the municipalities in the Polog region with an average openness of 19%.

Chart 4. Openness of the planning regions for 2021
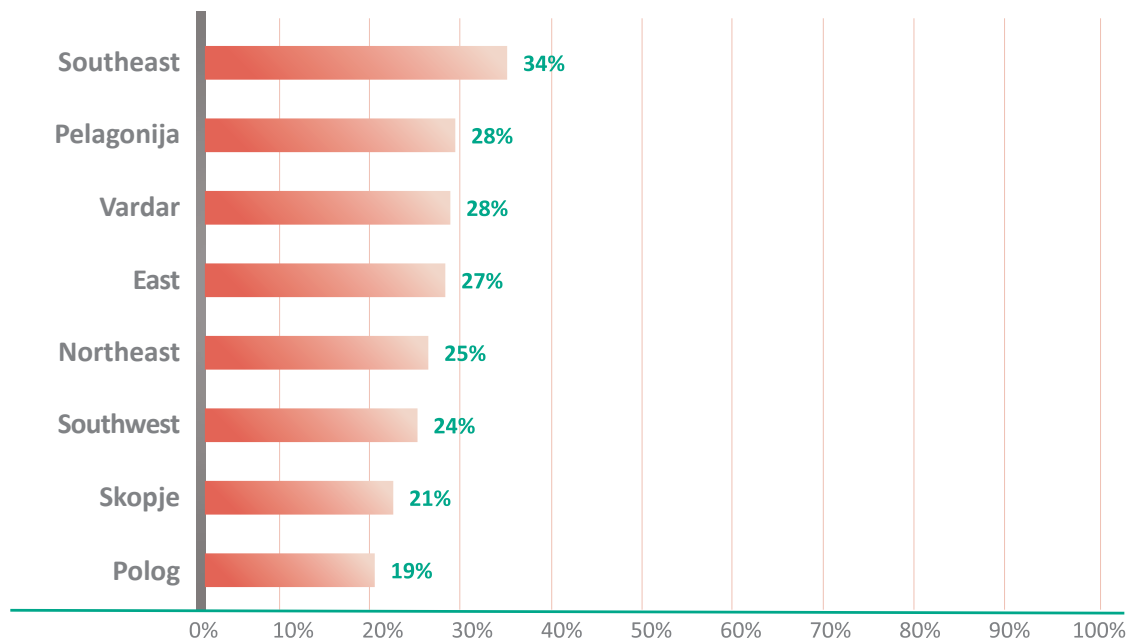
The results of the municipalities from the measurement according to the Openness Index for 2021 are the following:

Rank	Municipality	Overall openness percent
1	Ohrid	51%
2	Vasilevo	48%
2	Kočani	48%
3	Bitola	46%
3	Kavadarci	46%
3	Valandovo	46%
4	Veles	45%
5	Karpoš	41%
5	Prilep	41%
6	Gevgelija	40%
7	Štip	39%
7	Želino	39%
8	Kriva Palanka	37%

Rank	Municipality	Overall openness percent
8	Kumanovo	37%
8	Demir Hisar	37%
9	Strumica	36%
9	Vevčani	36%
9	Berovo	36%
9	Delčevo	36%
10	Radoviš	35%
10	Gjorče Petrov	35%
10	Centar	35%
10	Konče	35%
10	Makedonska Kamenica	35%
11	Bogdanci	32%
11	City of Skopje	32%
11	Aerodrom	32%
11	Gazi Baba	32%
12	Kruševo	31%
12	Sveti Nikole	31%
13	Gostiavr	30%
13	Kratovo	30%
13	Negotino	30%
14	Ilinden	29%
14	Čaška	29%
15	Novo Selo	28%
15	Kisela Voda	28%
16	Petrovec	26%
16	Tetovo	26%
17	Lipkovo	25%
17	Debar	25%
18	Zrnovci	24%
18	Novaci	24%
18	Debarca	24%
19	Resen	23%
19	Gradsko	23%
20	Kičevo	21%
21	Bosilovo	20%
21	Šuto Orizari	20%

Rank	Municipality	Overall openness percent
21	Češinovo-Obleševo	20%
21	Struga	20%
22	Makedonski Brod	19%
22	Brvenica	19%
22	Čair	19%
23	Mogila	18%
23	Rosoman	18%
24	Dojran	17%
24	Jegunovce	17%
24	Pehčevo	17%
24	Vinica	17%
24	Centar Župa	17%
24	Krivogaštani	17%
25	Dolneni	16%
26	Mavrovo and Rostuše	15%
27	Rankovce	14%
27	Bogovinje	14%
27	Demir Kapija	14%
27	Lozovo	14%
28	Probištip	13%
28	Karbinci	13%
29	Saraj	11%
30	Butel	10%
31	Tearce	8%
32	Zelenikovo	7%
32	Studeničani	7%
32	Sopište	7%
32	Staro Nagoričane	7%
33	Aračinovo	5%
33	Čučer-Sandevo	5%
33	Vrapčište	5%
34	Plasnica	3%

Below is given an overview of the LSGU results in each category and sub-category.

3.2.TRANSPARENCY

„Transparency" refers to the policies, activities and measures that the municipality undertakes to inform its citizens about its work

Transparency and accountability should be the starting principles in the operation of municipalities. Although declaratively all LSGUs strive for greater transparency, in fact very few of them publish all the necessary information related to their work.

The existence of basic tools for informing the citizens is a legal obligation of the municipalities. The accessibility and functionality of the information tools is a commitment of the municipality to present the information to its citizens in the most appropriate way.

Publishing and access to information on municipal operations, budgets, contracts, employment decisions or public procurement through the Internet strengthens external control and oversight by CSOs, experts and the general public.

Greater transparency of LSGUs is also an important tool in the fight against disinformation and fake news.

The research for 2021 showed that all municipalities have functional websites, but a significant part of them are developed at a very low level, some are not in the domain gov. mk, and some do not meet the requirements for cyber security.

Local self-government units meet 32% of the indicators covered in the category of transparency.

Chart 5. Transparency of LSGUs according to the four sub-categories
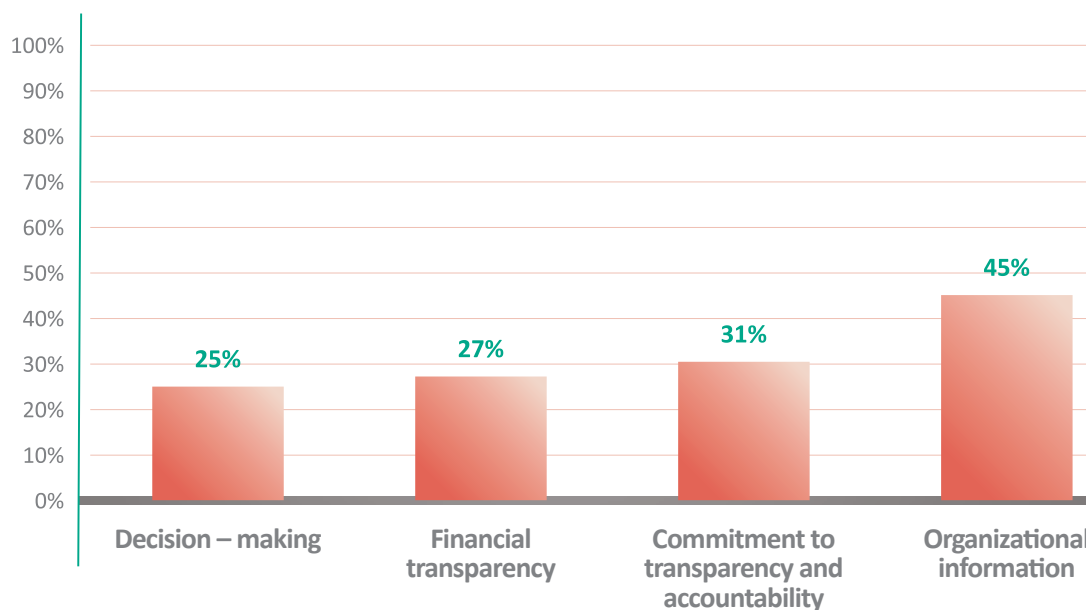
This result shows that the transparency of LSGUs needs to be significantly improved. Local governments should proactively publish as much information as possible on municipal websites as they are now the main source of information on the quality of governance. Municipalities should make efforts to increase the overall transparency in their operations and in particular the publication of data regarding the decisions made by the Mayor and the Council, as well as data regarding the financial operations.

Chart 6. Top 10 ranked municipalities in the category of Transparency
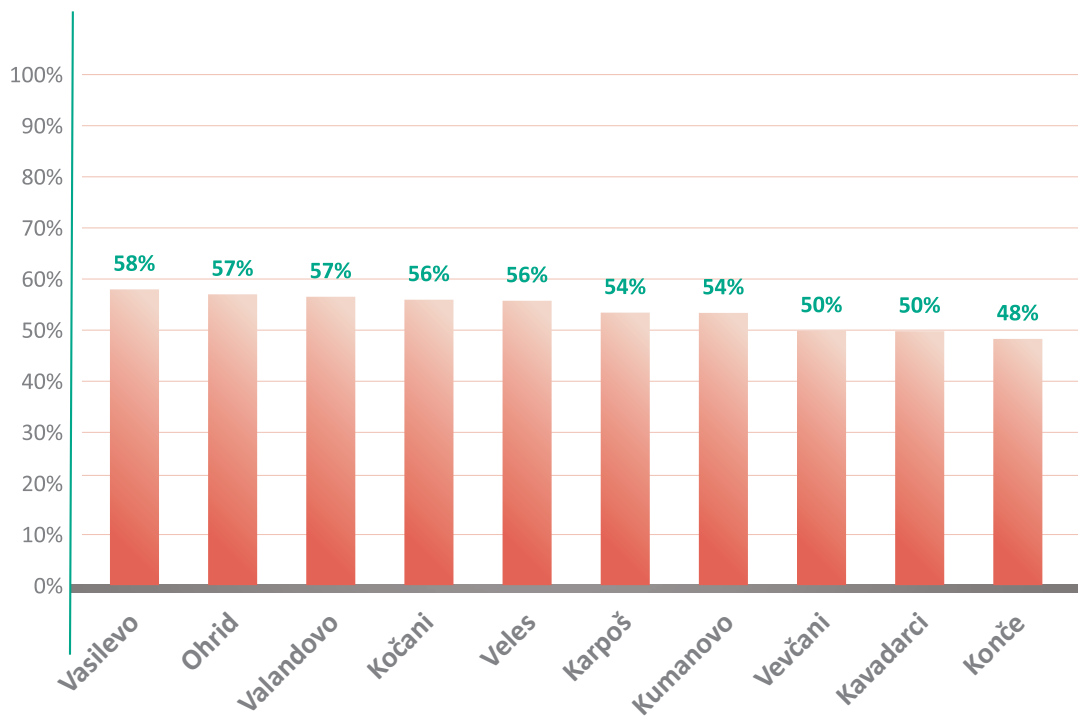
Regarding transparency, the best results are ascribed to Municipality Vasilevo (58%), and the lowest results come from Municipality Vrapčište (4%).

During the research, it was noticed that a large number of important information, documents and data are published by the LSGU only in the official municipal newspapers. This turns out to be a negative practice because the data published in this way is very difficult to find and process. The ordinary citizen in most cases will not be able to come across the desired information that is published in the official municipal newspapers, which does not meet their basic purpose - informing the citizens. This data and information should be well structured and published directly within the menus and sections of the municipal websites to be easily accessible.

In the area of transparency, the indicators are organized into four sub-categories:

▶ Commitment to transparency and accountability, which includes transparency and accountability policies and ongoing training;

- ▶ Organizational information related to the structure of the municipality, basic competencies and personnel issues;

- ▶ Decision-making by the Council and the Mayor;

- ▶ Financial transparency, which includes public procurement, budget, final accounts and financial statements.

3.2.1. Commitment to transparency and accountability

The existence of a clear policy for transparency, accountability and accessibility of the municipality indicates the commitment of the municipality to be at the service of the citizens. Municipalities meet some of the legal requirements for publishing information and documents. However, this information is often published in formats that are not suitable for research and processing. Presentation of open data by the municipalities will enable easier workability of the data themselves and greater transparency of the municipality. Open data is one of the most important commitments in the RN Macedonia Open Government Partnership Program. The long-term commitment to the openness of the municipality should be translated into a specific strategic or action plan that should be published on the website.

This sub-category contains indicators for the basic policy of the municipality for transparency and accountability such as the existence of a strategic commitment of the municipality to be transparent and accountable; investing in the education of municipal workers on transparency and accountability; the existence of basic preconditions for informing the citizens and presenting the data of the municipality in open format.

Local self-government units meet 31% of the indicators covered in the sub-category commitment to transparency and accountability.

Municipal websites are the primary place where citizens have access to obtain data and information on the functioning of municipalities or to exercise any of their rights or obligations. According to this, the websites of the municipalities are the most important tool for information and the LSGU must ensure that this tool is functional and useful for the visitors.

The research for 2021 showed that part of the LSGUs should improve the quality of their websites and make them more convenient for the users. Many municipal websites still do not contain the basic information required by law; some of them, such as the municipality of Krivogaštani, are not registered in the domain gov.mk; some municipalities, such as the municipality of Ilinden, have two websites; some websites, such as the municipality of Saraj, do not meet the requirements for cyber security and many do not have functional search tools.

Some of the municipalities do not regularly update all language versions of the websites, i.e. the information is not published consistently and is not available in all official languages of the municipality.

Most municipalities do not have a document (strategy, policy, procedure) regarding openness and transparency. Municipalities should also invest more in educating employees on topics such as transparency, accountability, open data and the like.

Regarding the planning regions, in the sub-category commitment to transparency and accountability, the LSGUs in the Northeast region are rated the highest (41%), and the municipalities in the Vardar region the lowest (24%).

Chart 7. Openness of the planning regions in the sub-category commitment to transparency and accountability for 2021
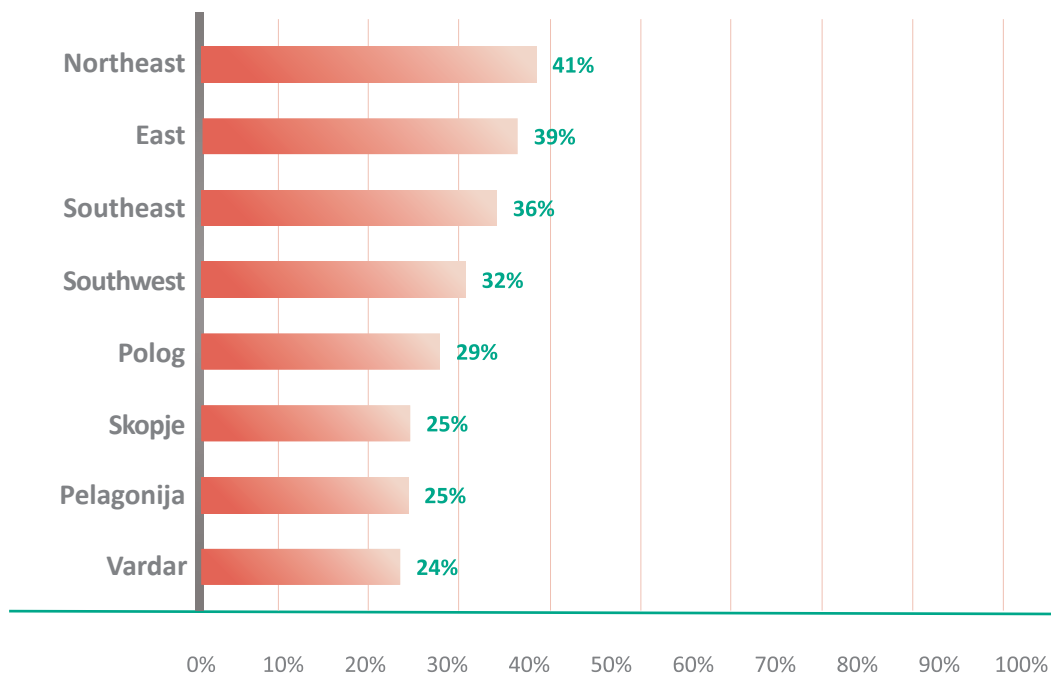
In the sub-category commitment to transparency and accountability, the research showed that the municipalities of Strumica and Lipkovo have the best results with 78%, and the municipalities of Mogila, Vrapčiste and Plasnica have the lowest score with 9%.

In general, it can be concluded that the websites of the municipalities are limited in their functionality and usefulness. Most websites are not easy to use and visitors often cannot easily and quickly get the necessary data. Municipalities should prepare a document outlining their strategic commitment to be transparent and accountable.

3.2.2.Organizational information

Access to basic information about the competencies of the municipality, basic documents for the municipality's operation and personnel issues are a legal obligation of the municipalities. With these data, the citizens receive basic information about the functioning of the municipality, the basic contacts of the decision-makers and the persons in charge of their implementation. In fact, these data provide a basic picture of the work of the municipality, the areas of its activity and measure the accessibility and responsiveness of municipal officials to citizens.

According to the legal framework in our country, LSGUs have obligations for collecting a large number of data and keeping records. If these data are not limited by the Law on Personal Data Protection, they should be published on the websites of the municipalities.

This sub-area contains indicators that refer to basic data on the competencies of the municipality and its property; basic documents for the operation of the municipality; basic information about different municipal bodies: mayor, council, public enterprises, local communities, personnel issues and organizational set-up.

Local self-government units meet 45% of the indicators covered in the sub-area of organizational information.

Municipalities generally publish limited information about their operation on websites. LSGUs usually publish basic documents for the operation of the municipality such as the Statute, the Rules of Procedure, the organizational chart, data related to the members of the Council and the like. Very few municipalities publish detailed information about public enterprises and their operations.

Regarding the planning regions, in the sub-category of organizational information, the LSGUs in the Northeast region have the highest rating (51%), and the municipalities in the Skopje region have the lowest (39%).

Chart 8. Openness of the planning regions in the sub-category organizational information

Region	Percentage
Northeast	51%
East	50%
Pelagonija	50%
Southeast	49%
Vardar	47%
Polog	43%
Southwest	39%
Skopje	39%
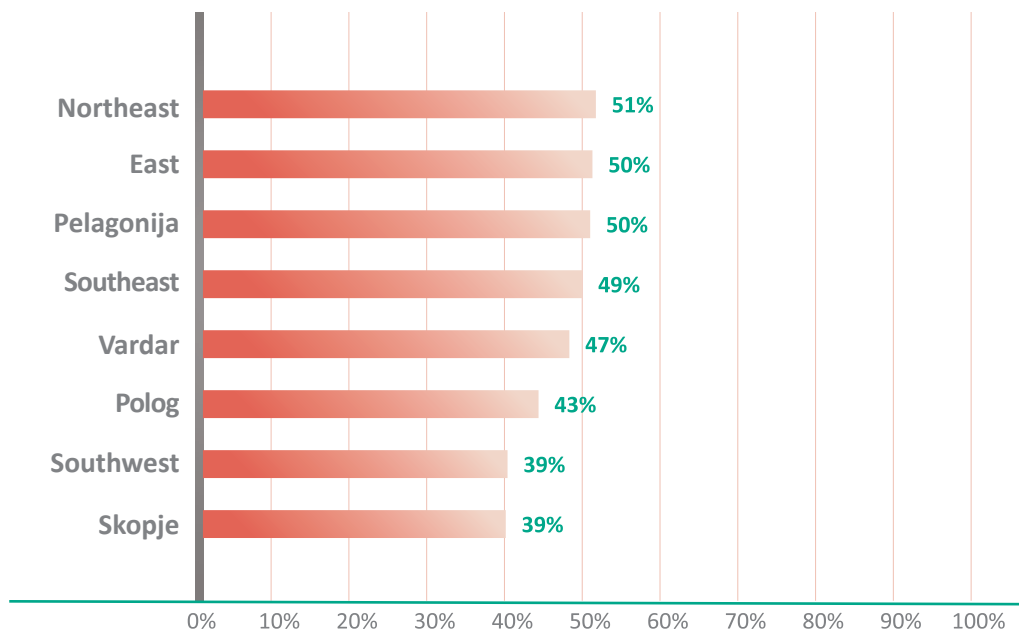
In the sub-category of organizational information, the research showed that the municipality of Zelino has the highest score (76%), and the municipality of Plasnica has the lowest score with 0%.

It can be concluded that the municipalities should publish on their websites data on personnel issues such as complete lists of employees with contact data, data on persons hired with work contracts, temporary work contracts and copyright agreements. They should also include more detailed information about public enterprises and their operations, not just a brief description or a link.

3.2.3.Decision-making

Citizens often address the municipality and their perception of this institution is often limited to the mayor. The role of the Council as a decision-maker and policy-maker is often overlooked.

This sub-category contains indicators related to the accessibility of data related to the decision-making process, i.e. transparency of the Council sessions, availability of documents and decisions, communication with the media and citizens by the Council and the Mayor.

Local self-government units meet only 25% of the indicators covered in the decision-making sub-category. This is the lowest score concerning the four sub-categories in the area of transparency.

The research showed that the municipalities publish very little data related to the decision-making process by the Council and the Mayor. The number of 21 municipalities that have not published any data related to the decision-making process is worrying.

This is an important area that needs to be improved because, with greater accessibility of information on the decisions of the Council and the Mayor and timely reporting on their work, citizens get the opportunity to be involved in public policymaking at the local level.

Regarding the planning regions, in the sub-category of decision-making, the highest-rated are the LSGUs in the Southeast region (52%), and the lowest are the municipalities in the Polog region (15%).

Chart 9. Openness of the planning regions in the decision-making sub-category
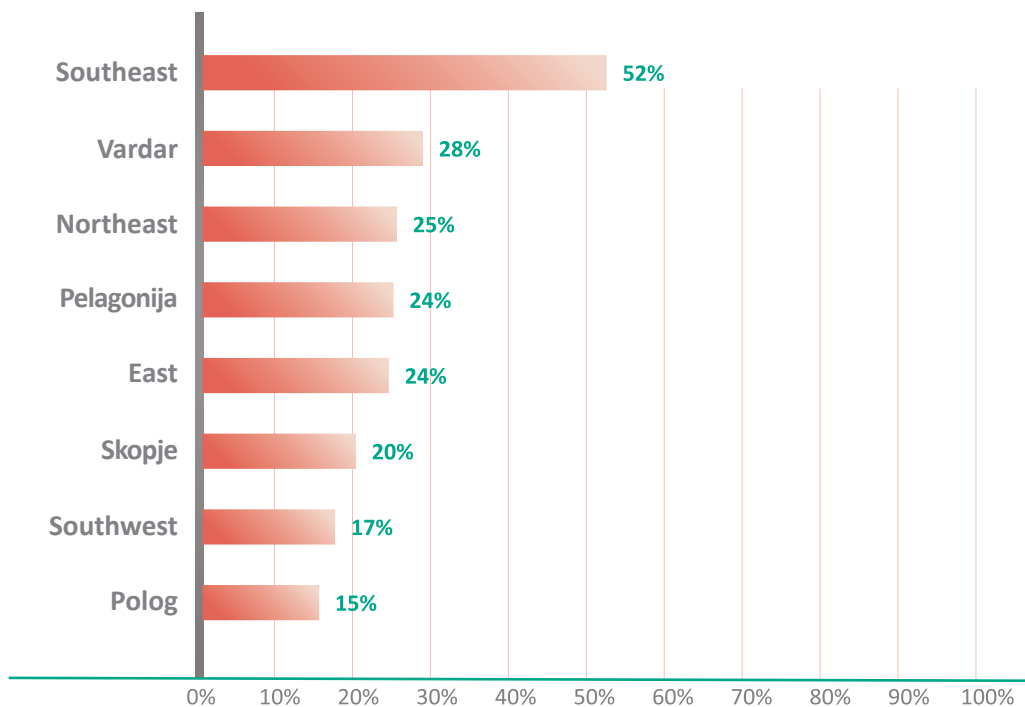
In this sub-category, the research showed that the municipality of Strumica has the best results (76%), while as many as 21 municipalities (Čair, Tearce, Sopište, Čučer-Sandevo, Dolneni, Demir Kapija, Probištip, Ilinden, Makedonski Brod, Aračinovo, Plasnica, Lipkovo, Vrapčiste, Rankovce, Kičevo, Saraj, Centar Župa, Staro Nagoričane, Butel, Studeničani and Krivogaštani) have not published any data related to the decision-making process.

The fact that a quarter of the municipalities in R.N. Macedonia, have not published any data on the decisions made by the Mayor and the Council, and other municipalities, in general, publish partial data is a serious shortcoming that must be addressed by the LSGUs. These data are some of the most important data that municipalities should publish regularly and on time because they directly affect the quality of life in local communities and enable monitoring of the work of the Mayor and the Council by citizens and stakeholders.

3.2.4.Financial transparency

Accessibility and visibility of all financial information: budgets, final accounts, financial statements and public procurement are a legal obligation of municipalities and public enterprises. Planning and transparently spending public money is a commitment of some municipalities and there are good practices of publishing information in an appropriate format accessible and understandable to citizens and involving citizens in setting priorities for financial planning.

Local self-government units meet only 27% of the indicators covered in the sub-category of financial transparency.

Municipalities should publish more data and information on the budget and spending of public money because it contributes to reducing corruption, as well as ensuring effective citizen participation in the budgeting process.

Municipalities should publish more data and information on the budget and spending of public money because it contributes to reducing corruption, as well as ensuring effective citizen participation in the budgeting process.

The research showed that 12 municipalities have not published the municipal budget on their website. Most LSGUs need to improve the participatory budgeting process for citizens to be involved in the budgeting and financial planning process. Thus, citizens can be involved in the most important part of policymaking at the local level. Only 10 municipalities have published a citizens' budget, which shortens the possibility for the citizens, simply, through graphs and illustrations, to understand the budget. The municipalities do not publish data on the salaries of the officials and the compensations of the members of the Municipal Council.

Regarding the planning regions, in the sub-area of financial transparency, the LSGUs in the South-East region are rated the highest with 38%, and the municipalities in the Polog region the lowest with only 15%.

Chart 10. Openness of the planning regions in the financial transparency sub-category
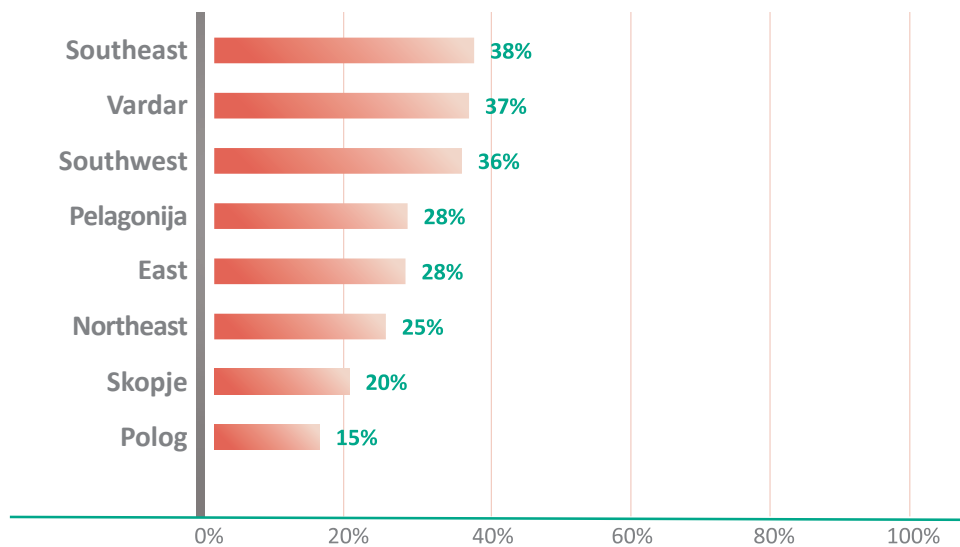
Region	Percentage
Southeast	38%
Vardar	37%
Southwest	36%
Pelagonija	28%
East	28%
Northeast	25%
Skopje	20%
Polog	15%

In the sub-category of financial transparency, the research showed that the municipality of Karpoš has the best results (58%), and the lowest evaluated are the municipalities of Tearce, Saraj, Studeničani, Sopište, Probištip, Vrapčište and Aračinovo which do not publish any data on their financial operations.

It can be concluded that municipalities should publish more financial information such as quarterly and annual financial reports, information or links on the financial operations of public enterprises, funds allocated to civil society organizations, data on salaries of officials and compensation of members of the municipal council. Some of the municipalities should promote accountability in publishing information related to public procurement, i.e. to publish public procurement plans, calls, decisions, contracts and annexes.

3.3.AWARENESS

„Awareness" refers to the quality of planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation of policies implemented by institutions

The predictability of the implementation of the public interest through public policies is essential for the citizens. To achieve predictability in decision-making at the local level, it is necessary to plan the goals that the LSGUs wants to achieve and to put them in a strategic document that is publicly available to citizens. Based on the goals, public policies are evaluated using monitoring and evaluation tools to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of public policies in achieving the set goals.

This area reviews the process of creating public policies in the municipality, the preparation and adoption of strategic documents, action plans, as well as the development of a plan and tools for monitoring and evaluating the implementation while implementing sectoral competencies that the municipality has.

The research showed that LSGUs have an average score of 13% in the indicators in the category of awareness. This is the category in which the municipalities have the weakest result. As many as 32 LSGUs or 40% of the municipalities do not publish any documents and data in this category. LSGUs do very little to collect and publish data on the effectiveness of policies, their degree of implementation and their impact. Accordingly, municipalities must implement systematic mechanisms that regularly assess the impact, costs and effects of policies and as such serve to develop strategic plans for the future, relying on data as evidence.

Chart 11. Awareness of LSGUs in North Macedonia regarding the two sub-categories
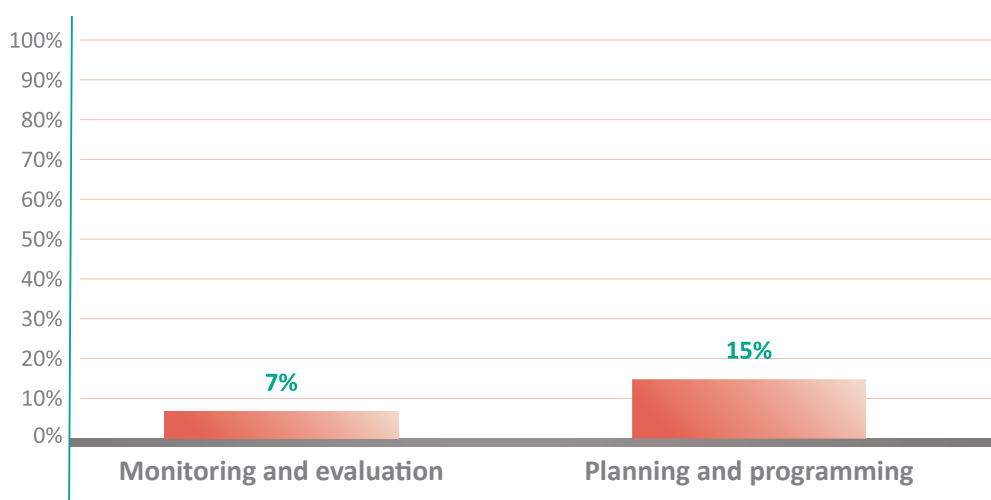
Chart 12.Top 10 ranked municipalities in the awareness category
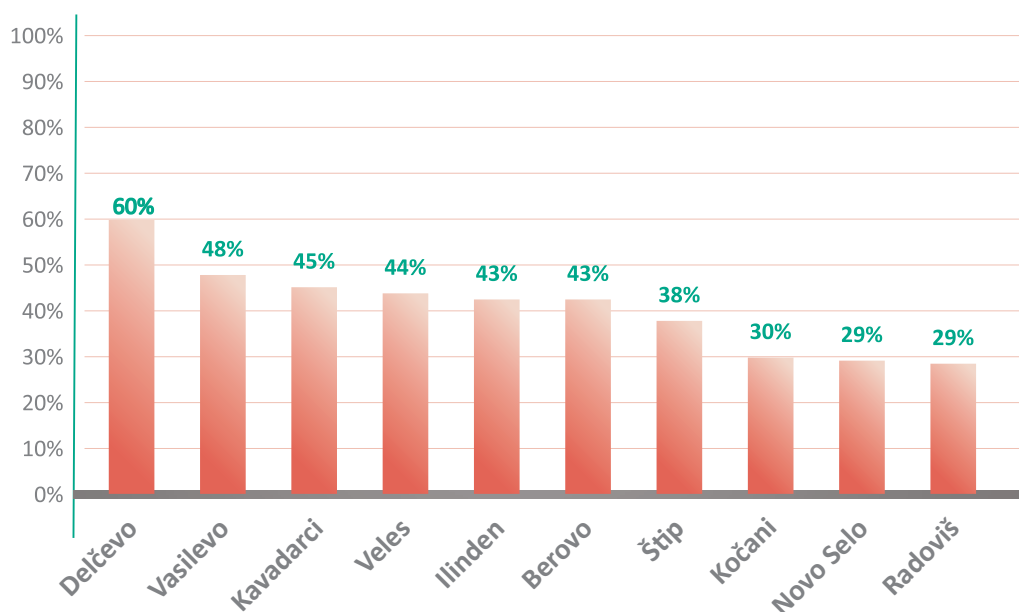
In the category of awareness, the municipality of Delčevo has the best results with 60%, while the following 32 LSGUs are evaluated with 0% because they do not publish any documents and data in this category: Tearce, Tetovo, Bosilovo, Krivogaštani, Dojran, Demir Kapija, Petrovec, Strumica, Mogila, Lozovo, Makedonski Brod, Debar, Plasnica, Vinica, Bogovinje, Karbinci, Vrapčište, Pehčevo, Sopište, Probištip, Zelenikovo, Aračinovo, Struga, Rankovce, Jegunovce, Saraj, Gazi Baba, Staro Nagoričane, Čučer-Sandevo, Studeničani, Brvenica and Butel.

The category of awareness covers the following sub-categories:

▶ Planning and programming, i.e. preparation of work programs for the municipality, strategic documents for development and development of monitoring indicators;

▶ Monitoring and evaluation (implementation of annual plans, reporting, use of indicators to measure the success of policy implementation)

3.3.1. Planning and programming

The strategic development documents and the work programs of the Mayor and the Council are important documents at the local level that indicate a planned approach to building local public policies in the service of the needs of the citizens. The accessibility of these documents for the citizens is a step towards greater involvement of the citizens in decision-making, and the existence of appropriate indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the documents indicates the level of quality of the documents. Strategic planning should be closely related to the process of preparing the municipal budget.

The practice of budget planning without an appropriate strategic framework causes municipalities to unrealistically plan budgets resulting in large debts.

Significant improvement of the strategic planning process at the local level is needed. Namely, most of the municipalities do not publish the necessary strategic and planning documents and do not have a written plan that sets the development goals (Development Strategy) and/or an action plan for the implementation of the Development Strategy.

Regarding the planning regions, in the sub-category of planning and programming, the LSGUs in the Vardar region are rated the highest with 26%, and the municipalities in the Polog region with only 2% are rated the lowest.

Chart 13. Fulfillment of indicators in the sub-category planning and programming in the planning regions
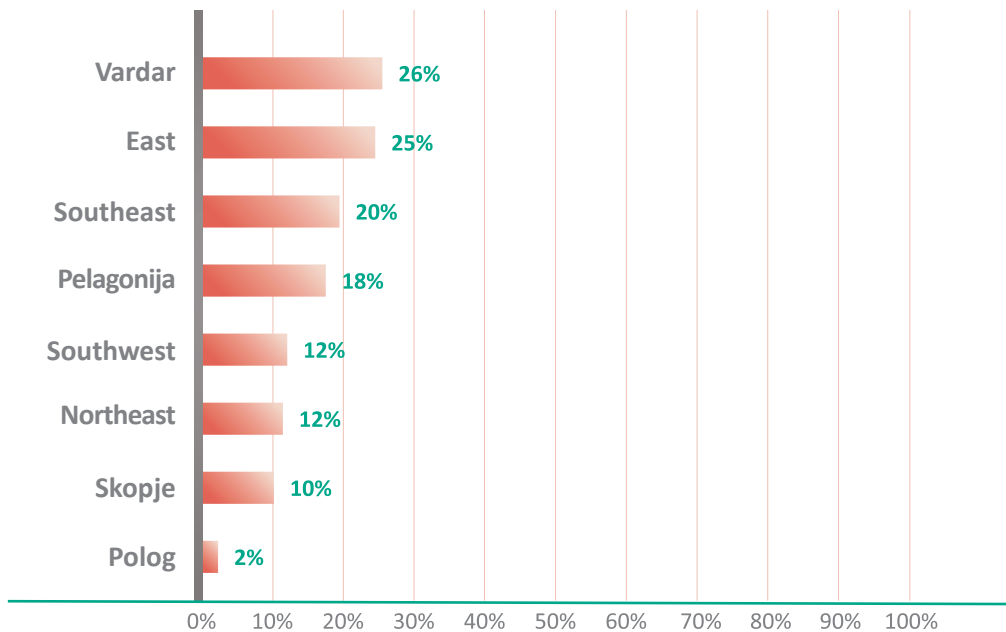
The results for this sub-category, as well as for the entire category, show low results. As many as 37 municipalities do not meet the indicators included in the sub-category of planning and programming at all. A positive example in this sub-category is the municipality of Delčevo which meets 78% of the indicators.

It can be concluded that LSGUs should prepare and publish the planning and strategic documents with time frame, budget allocations and responsible bodies for implementation.

3.3.2. Monitoring and evaluation

The implementation of the strategies and annual plans of the municipalities should be analyzed through visible and easily measurable indicators and should be presented objectively based on the previously set indicators. The possibility for objective measurement of the realized goals reduces the risk that the municipal media are only an „advertisement" for the work of the municipality.

Indicators in this area assess the extent to which municipalities measure the effectiveness of the policies and activities they implement.

The research showed that as much as 73% or 59 of the monitored LSGUs do not use performance indicators in the preparation of annual work plans and work reports. The non-existence of these data prevents the public from realistically monitoring the work of the LSGUs and having a clear picture of what has been done.

Regarding the planning regions, in the sub-category monitoring and evaluation, the LSGUs in the South-East region are rated the highest (16%), and the municipalities in the Northeast region are rated the lowest (0%).

Chart 14. Fulfillment of indicators in the sub-category monitoring and evaluation in the planning regions
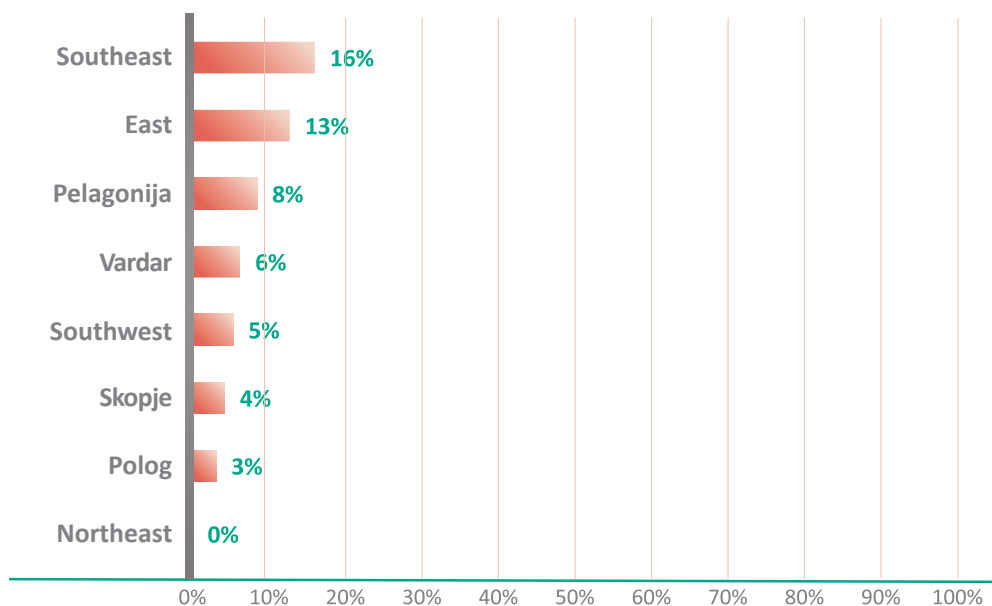
In general, LSGUs should regularly assess the impact, costs and effects of policies and use this data to develop strategic plans for the future. Collecting data on the effectiveness of policies, their degree of implementation and their impact will enable them to generate and publish useful and realistic reports on the progress of the implementation of activities.

3.4.ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility" refers to how LSGUs communicate and involve the citizens of the municipality while responding to their requests and meeting their needs

Accessibility is related to ensuring and respecting the procedures for free access to information, improving access to information through public debate mechanisms and strengthening interaction with citizens. Municipalities do this by providing access to information and appropriate services for citizens, consulting citizens and maintaining two-way communication. Citizens' participation in the decision-making process is especially important for local democracy because it leads to increased transparency.

In the category of accessibility, the research showed that the result of the local government is 22%, with the highest score, for the indicators of the sub-category interaction with citizens - 45%, and the lowest score for the other sub-categories, access to information and services - 21% and public consultations - 18%.

Chart 15. Accessibility to LSGUs according to the three sub-categories
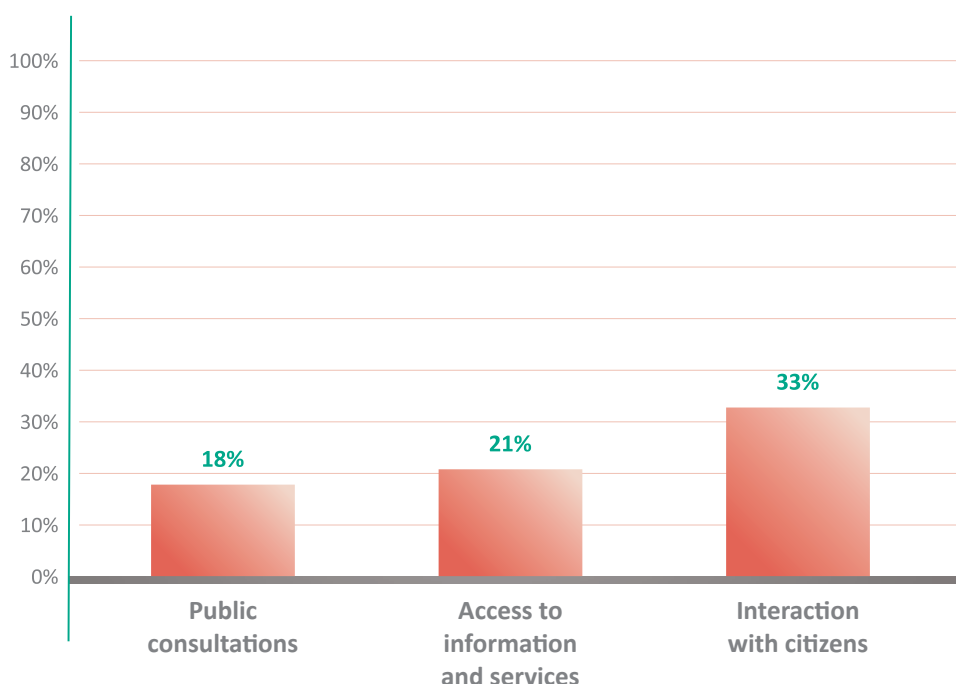
Regarding accessibility, the best results are shown by the Municipality of Bitola (51%), and the lowest results are ascribed to the Municipality of Plasnica (0%).

Chart 16. Top 10 ranked municipalities in the category of Accessibility
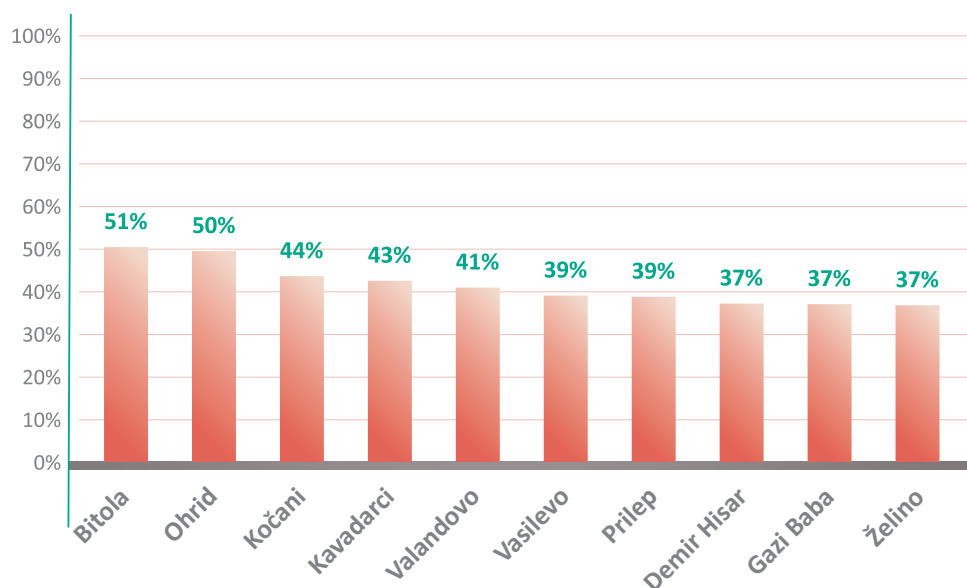
According to the obtained results, it can be concluded that LSGUs should improve the process of public consultations and increase the participation of citizens in the process of policy-making and decision-making at the local level by creating more opportunities and publishing more information for the inclusion of citizens in the decision-making process.

The indicators within this category are divided into three sub-categories:

▶ Access to information and services, which include free access to public information, accessibility of services and informing citizens about the work of the municipality;

▶ Public consultations, which cover various opportunities for citizen involvement in the decision-making process by the mayor and the council, the work of the municipality and budget planning;

▶ Interaction with the citizens, i.e. the possibilities for two-way communication between the municipalities and the citizens through dedicated tools and social media, the accessibility of the Mayor and the municipal bodies.

3.4.1.Access to information and services

National legislation and international principles and good practices show that access to information is a fundamental right of the citizens of the municipality. The municipality is legally obliged to deliver many services to the citizens. Access to municipal services, and above all e-services, are important for citizens and their daily lives. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the EU's strategic commitment to digitalization, the development of e-services should be a priority for the municipalities. As part of their competencies, municipalities have a legal obligation to create and maintain registers in various fields.

The publication of registers, databases and information from different areas indicates the openness of the municipality to contribute to the development of sectoral policies.

The results of the LSGUs from the research shows 21% fulfillment of the indicators related to the sub-category of access to information and services. This shows that there is still an incomplete and inconsistent application of the Law on Free Access to Public Information, which leads to limited transparency of LSGUs and incomplete realization of the right of individuals and legal entities to access public information.

Most municipalities do not publish registers, databases and information from various areas that they have a legal obligation to create and maintain. In general, LSGUs do not publish the information on their websites which are provided through submitted requests for free access to public information.

The development of electronic services at the local level is not yet at the required level. The report „Quality of services provided by LSGUs through their WEB portals" of the State Statistical Office, published in June 2021, states that „the current quality of services provided by LSGUs on web portals does not provide effective and fast service. The availability of e-services online by applying the Web Accessibility Standards for e-services is still not at a satisfactory level. The provision of e-services is not unified. Access to a particular service is difficult, as is navigation through web portals. The availability of information, instructions, forms for a certain service, as well as the search of web contents is not uniform in all LSGUs. This situation does not allow the services to be implemented effectively, with equal treatment, and accessibility for every citizen."

Regarding the planning regions, in the sub-category of access to information and services, the LSGUs in the South-East region were rated the highest (29%), and the municipalities in the South-West region were the lowest (17%).

Chart 17. Fulfillment of indicators in the sub-category access to information and services in the planning regions
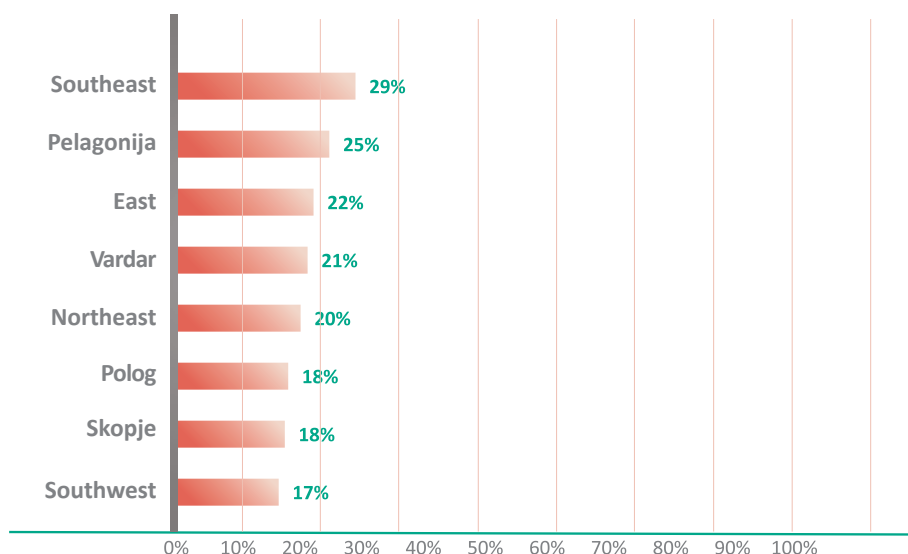
According to the research in the sub-category of access to information and services, the municipalities of Ohrid and Bitola are ranked highest with 53%, while the municipalities of Plasnica, Studeničani, Aračinovo and Mavrovo and Rostuše are ranked lowest with 0%.

It can be concluded that LSGUs should work more on proactive transparency and provide greater access to information from their work. Municipalities need to fully implement the Law on Free Access to Public Information. LSGUs should develop a larger number of electronic services to improve the efficiency of public service delivery and should publish and regularly update all information and forms related to obtaining services.

3.4.2.Public consultations

OThe municipality is the lowest level of government and thus is closest to the citizens. Access to information and one-way communication is not enough to establish cooperation with the municipality. The municipality is expected to provide consultation to citizens and obtain their opinion on public policies, services, etc. Public consultations aim to create responsible policies based on evidence that reflects the needs of citizens.

Although the constant involvement of the citizens in the work of the municipalities is determined by the laws and the municipal statutes and acts, still the results show a low level of public consultations at the local level

The research showed that LSGUs have a low score of 18% in the sub-category of public consultations. As many as 33 municipalities have not published any data in this sub-category. This indicates that LSGUs must urgently commit to improving the public consultation process and they should be conducted both online and offline.

In general, the websites of the municipalities do not contain enough information about the public consultations, the plans for public consultations, the calls for public debates and the reports from the conducted public debates are not published on the website of the municipality.

Regarding the planning regions, in the sub-area of public consultations, the LSGUs in the South-East region are rated the highest (28%), and the municipalities in the Polog region the lowest (4%).

Chart 18. Fulfillment of indicators in the sub-category of public consultations in the planning regions

Southeast — 28%
Pelagonija — 24%
Southwest — 23%
Skopje — 20%
Northeast — 16%
Vardar — 15%
East — 11%
Polog — 4%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
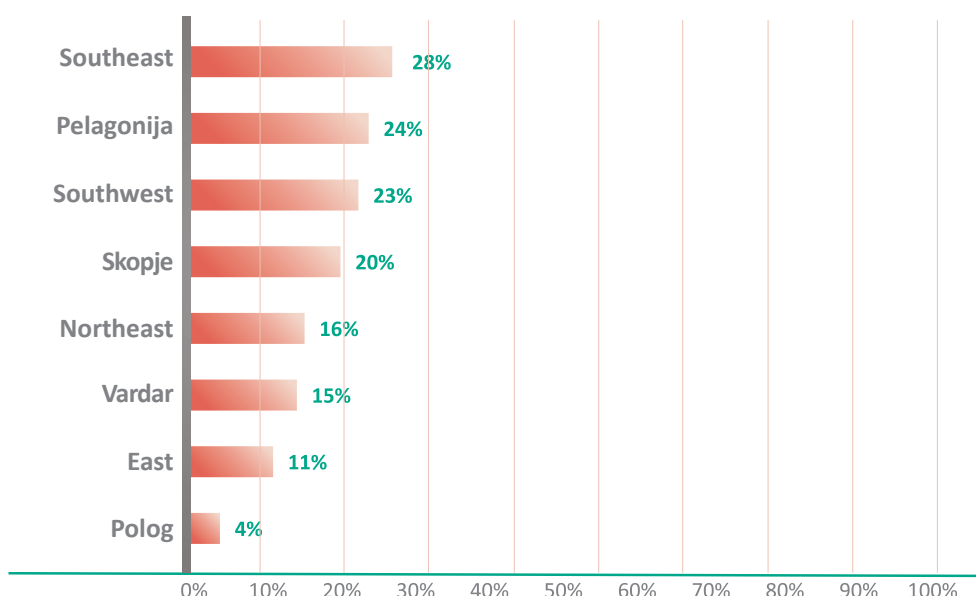
In the sub-category of public consultations, the best results were shown by the municipalities of Gjorce Petrov, Centar and Radoviš with 69%, while as many as 33 LSGUs have not published any data in this sub-category.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only increased the need for online public consultation. Thereby, the municipalities should determine in detail the consultation process with precisely defined steps and time frames. Information on public consultations should be published on time. Municipalities should also encourage the participation of citizens and other stakeholders in consultations.

3.4.3. Interaction with citizens

For successful adoption and implementation of local public policies that will be sustainable and in the service of citizens, the municipality should involve citizens in the decision-making process. In addition to several tools for consulting citizens and their involvement in the work of the municipality provided in the legal framework, there are many good practices of cooperation between the municipality and citizens to meet the needs of citizens and implement their suggestions on an ad-hoc basis.

This sub-category includes indicators that assess whether municipalities use different tools to interact with citizens such as social media and whether they introduce interactive communication tools on their websites. In this way, the institutions aim to convey the information in a processed form and to encourage the citizens to communicate with them more often. Through the interaction with the public, it is possible to responsibly receive feedback from citizens as end-users.

The research showed that LSGUs have a score of 33% in the sub-category of interaction with the citizens. Most municipalities have official Facebook profiles, and some have profiles on other social media. Many municipalities use the mayor's Facebook profile instead of the municipality's official profile as the primary place to post information. This is a negative practice that should be eradicated because in this way the focus is more political advertising of the mayor himself, instead of timely and accurate information to citizens according to their needs. Only 25 municipalities have published on their websites time for consultations of the mayor with the citizens. Only 10 LSGUs in the last year acted upon a proposal received through one of the tools for civic participation (civic initiative, gathering of citizens, referendum, complaints and proposals).

Regarding the planning regions, in the sub-category of interaction with the citizens, the LSGUs in the Southeast region have the highest score with 40%, and the municipalities in the South-West region have the lowest score with 23%.

Chart 19. Fulfillment of indicators in the sub-category of interaction with citizens in the planning regions
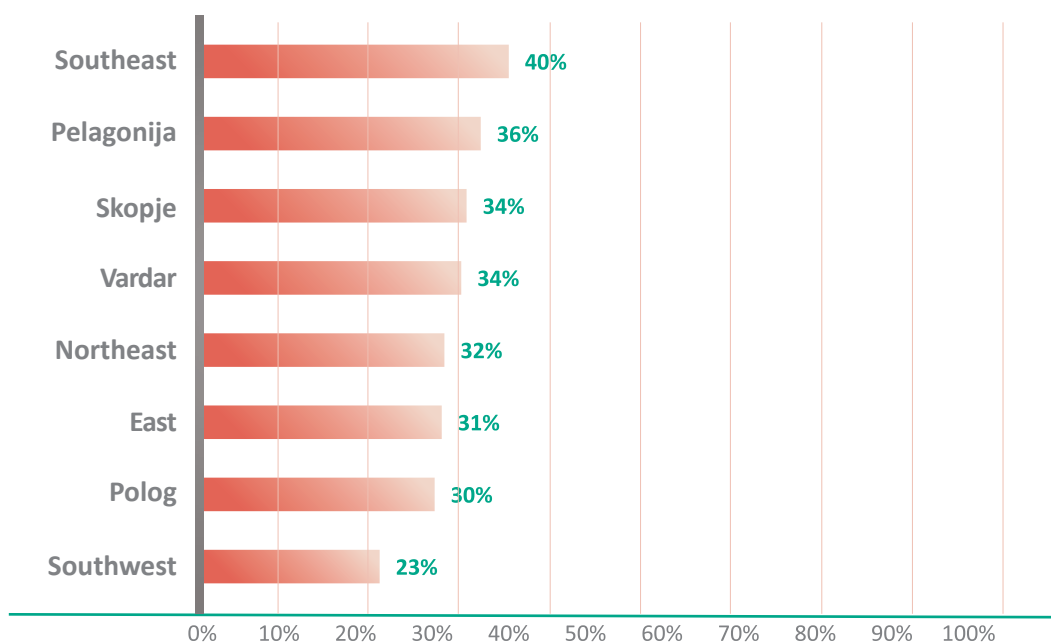
In the sub-category of interaction with the citizens, the municipalities of Valandovo and Kočani are ranked highest with 75%, while the municipalities of Plasnica and Bogdanci are ranked lowest with 0%.

The municipalities must enable the citizens to effectively use the established communication channels and to encourage them to send their proposals, needs and problems through one of the tools for civic participation.

3.5.INTEGRITY

"Integrity" assesses the consistent adherence to ethical values, principles and norms that aim to prioritize the public interest over the private

Municipal transparency and openness policies contribute to the fight against corruption. The integrity of administrative officials and local officials is the basis for preventing conflicts of interest and the proper functioning of local self-government.

According to the OECD recommendations, institutions should have developed a strategic approach to improving public integrity and mitigating the risks of corruption in the public sector. For this approach to be effective, the measures need to be based on reliable evidence and identify risks in the process in consultation with key stakeholders.

This sub-category contains indicators that show the existence and accessibility of integrity and anti-corruption policy, education of administrative staff on this topic, code of ethics of administrative officials and local officials and prevention of conflicts of interest.

The results of the LSGU from the research shows 19% fulfillment of the indicators related to the area of integrity. 21% of the municipalities do not publish any data in this area. This shows that municipalities need to establish stronger accountability mechanisms in their structure and take more action to promote integrity and prevent conflicts of interest and corruption. Only 29 LSGUs publish information on sponsorships and donations on their websites, and only 8 municipalities publish detailed information on job advertisements and newly hired persons with points achieved during the procedure in the past 12 months.

In the area of integrity, the highest-ranked are the municipalities of Želino, Demir Hisar, Mogila, Makedonska Kamenica and Gevgelija with 57%, and even 22 LSGUs have not published any data in this category

Chart 20. Top 10 ranked municipalities in the category of integrity

Chart 20. Top 10 ranked municipalities in the category of integrity
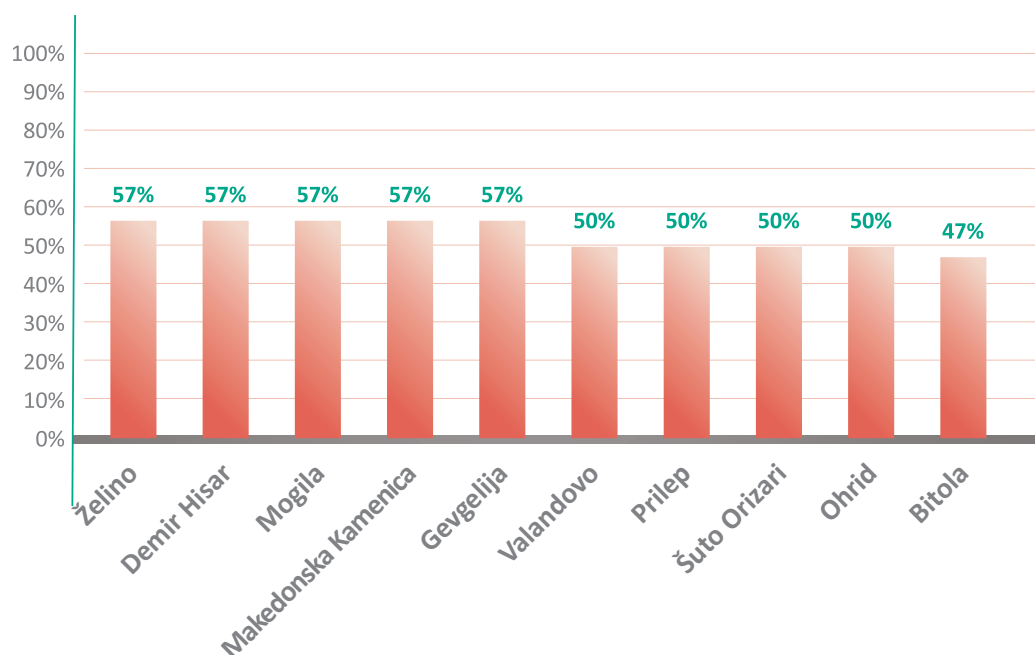
Regarding the planning regions, in the category of integrity, the LSGUs in the Pelagonija region are rated the highest (30%), and the municipalities in the Polog region the lowest (12%).

Chart 21. Fulfillment of indicators in the category of integrity in the planning regions
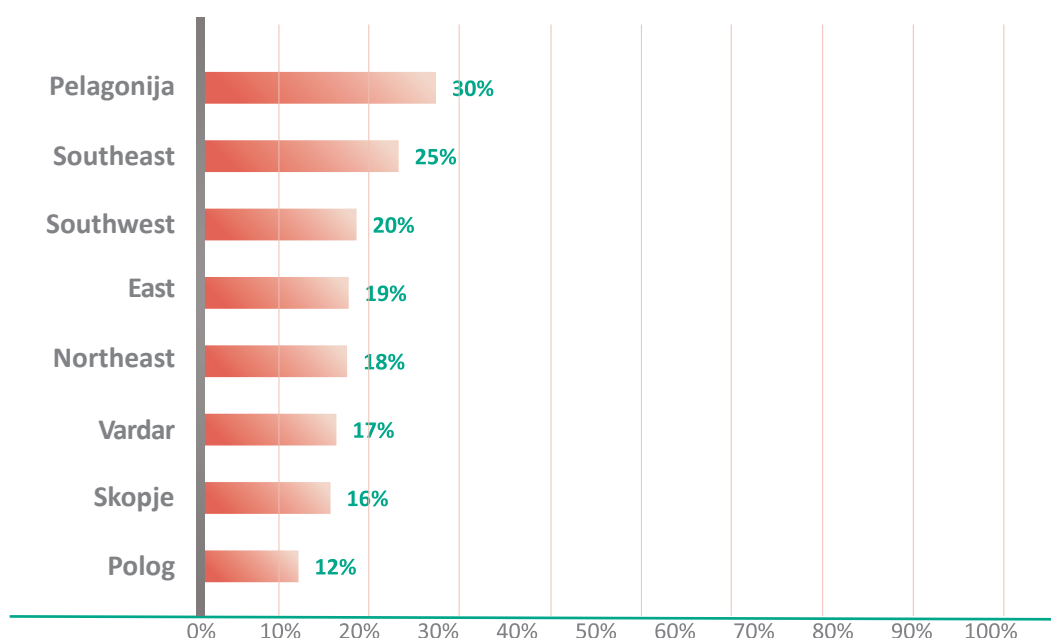
It can be concluded that municipalities should work on establishing systems of integrity and measures for the prevention and elimination of various forms of corrupt and unethical behavior in an institution. LSGUs should improve the capacities of the employees in the category.

3.6.OPEN DATA

Open data is at the heart of the concept of Open Government. They directly contribute to increasing the transparency of LSGUs, improving public services, stimulating economic development and greater efficiency of the administration. According to the Law on the Use of Public Sector Data, the municipalities are obliged to constantly publish open data.

With this horizontal category of „open data," the index analyzes the practices of municipalities for the openness of the data they publish. The index rewards municipalities that are committed to publish „open format" information that is technically easy to process.

The research showed that LSGUs meet only 12% of the indicators covered in the area of open data. Although the results in this area are poor, there are some good examples of municipalities working to open the data.

In the area of open data, the municipalities of Vasilevo and Ohrid have the best results with 27%, while the lowest-ranked is the municipality of Plasnica with 0%.

*Chart 22. Top 10 ranked municipalities in the category of open data*
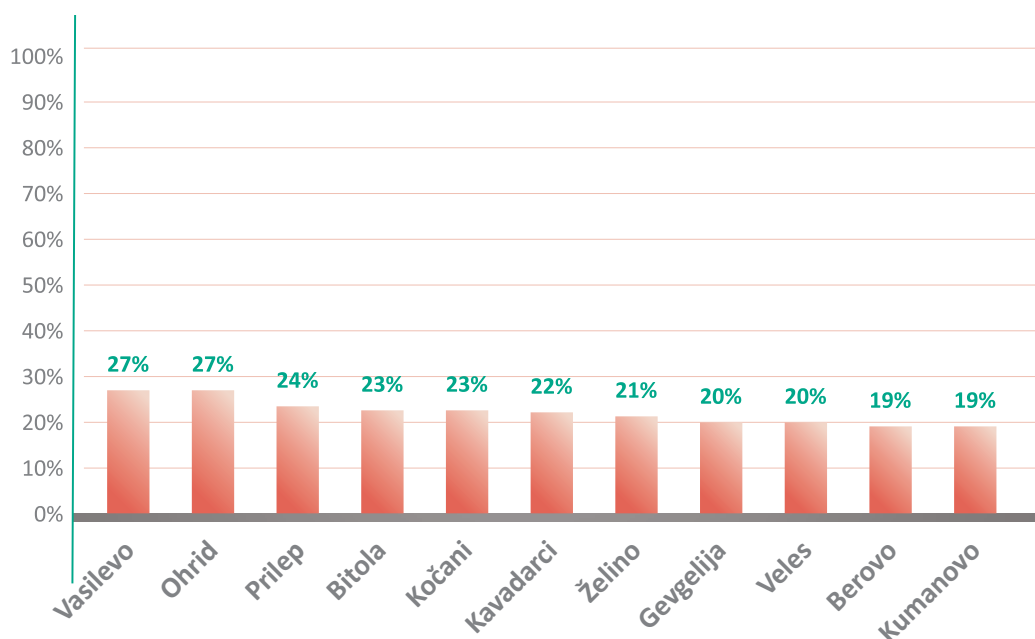
The results show that municipalities publish some of the documents (data sets) by their legal obligation, but not all. However, for the first time this year, data sets in fully open (machine-readable) format have been published by some municipalities.

Ohrid, Kavadarci, Prilep, Vasilevo, Zrnovci, Aerodrom, Štip, Gjorče Petrov, Vevčani, Želino, Kumanovo and Rosoman for the first time this year published on their websites data sets in a machine-readable format. Although the number of municipalities is not large (12) this is significant progress in the operation of these LSGUs and a big step forward in their efforts to promote openness in operations.

It is important to note that the City of Skopje published 14 new data sets in an open format on the national portal data.gov.mk, but these data sets are not published on their website nor is there a link to the data.

The National Open Data Portal, data.gov.mk, to date contains 281 data sets published by 57 entities, and only 3 of them are LSGUs.

It can be concluded that although we have an improvement in the publication of open data in some municipalities, still in general, LSGUs should work more on the preparation of data sets in open (machine-readable) format and constantly publish and update them.

3.7. MUNICIPAL COUNCIL AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

Although the municipal council and public enterprises are an integral part of the LSGU, they, unlike the departments, the mayor, or the administration, have separate, specific responsibilities and duties. Given this, the Openness Index as another horizontal category (in addition to open data) were monitored indicators for which the municipal council and public enterprises are directly responsible.

In general, the success, efficiency and transparency in the work of the council are followed by the openness of the municipality - that is, the more transparent and effective the council, the more open the municipality, and vice versa. Of course, there are municipalities where this connection is not so linear, but in most cases, the role of the council in the overall openness of the municipality is in line with other sectors and the administration.

Regarding the public enterprises, unfortunately, we found a serious lack of information on the websites of the municipalities about them. In some municipalities, there is no or minimal information on the composition, operation and budgeting of the public enterprise. Unlike the municipal councils, the level of openness in public enterprises does not follow the openness of the municipality in which that public enterprise operates - that is, public enterprises have a significantly lower average transparency of only 8%. Even in municipalities with a relatively solid level of openness, public enterprises remain „closed", i.e. with 0% transparency

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4. CONCLUSION

The Openness Index survey for 2021 shows that the low level of compliance with the principles of good governance by the LSGU continues.

Municipalities need to increase transparency in their operations, especially the publication of data regarding the decisions made by the Mayor and the Council, strategic and planning documents, documents for monitoring and measuring the effectiveness of policies and data regarding financial operations.

The new living conditions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic create the need for local authorities to publish more data and to continuously work on creating new channels for dialogue and cooperation with citizens and other stakeholders. This increases the use of ICT to improve openness in the operation of municipalities. Municipal websites need to be developed at a high level to be a functional and useful tool for visitors. They need to meet the requirements of cyber security and be tailored to the needs of the users.

Municipalities need to work harder to increase openness and base their work on the principles of transparency, accountability and participation, which, supported by new technologies and innovations, will improve public governance and strengthen public administration and democracy.

The development of strategic plans of the municipalities should be based on the data from the made impact assessments, costs and effects of the policies.

The websites of the municipalities should contain more detailed information and data related to the operation of the public enterprises established by the municipality.

According to the research, it can be concluded that the problem is still the proper implementation of the legal framework in the areas covered by the research, primarily the Law on Free Access to Public Information, the Law on Public Data Use and the legislation on financial operation of the LSGU.

Significant efforts are needed by the LSGU in the Polog planning region and part of the LSGU in the Skopje planning region to improve the openness in their work.

5. ROADMAP FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

To improve the openness of the municipalities, we give the following recommendations that should serve as a roadmap for good governance at the local level.

Transparency

▶ Municipal websites to be developed following national and international recommendations and standards, to be functional and to be regularly updated. This includes the obligation for all language versions of the websites to be regularly updated, i.e. the information to be published consistently and to be available in all official languages of the municipality;

▶ Municipal websites to meet cyber security requirements;

▶ Municipalities to have prepared and published a document that deals with their openness and transparency that will provide a defined and systematic approach to the publication of information and data;

▶ Municipal staff to continuously strengthen their capacities and knowledge of legal obligations and good practices in the field of openness policies, including open data;

▶ The data and information of the municipalities should not be published only in the official bulletins. They should be well structured and published within the menus and sections of the websites to be easy to find;

▶ Municipalities to publish the data sets they generate on their websites, as well as on the portal http://data.gov.mk/ ;

▶ LSGUs to regularly and timely publish the agenda for the sessions, as well as the minutes and other information related to the work of the Council;

▶ Municipalities to publish complete lists of positions and contacts of all employees with contact information (name and surname, position, department, office number, official telephone and e-mail);

▶ Municipalities to be transparent for temporary employment on different grounds and in this regard to publishing a list of persons hired with contracts (in action, author, for temporary work through agencies, etc.);

▶ The competencies of the municipality should be summarized and published with the basic information about the municipality for the citizens to know what type of questions they should address to the municipal bodies and what types of services to seek;

▶ Information on council members, working bodies and urban and local communities to be published on the municipality's website;

▶ Municipalities to publish more detailed information on public enterprises and institutions established by them;

▶ Decisions made by the Mayor and the Council to be regularly published on the website;

▶ Municipalities to provide video (or possibly audio) monitoring of Council sessions and to publish audio/video recordings as authentic documents enabling the monitoring of the work and decision-making by the Council. The entries should be in an appropriate downloadable format or link to an external publishing platform (e.g. the municipality's YouTube channel);

▶ Municipalities to proactively report on the work of the Council and the Mayor through timely publication of press releases on their work;

▶ The budget should be published together with all accompanying documents and information necessary for its adoption and execution. The budget should be available in full, including its revenue and expenditure side by item, as it is adopted together with all rebalances and documents for its implementation (financial plans and reports);

▶ Municipalities to publish a citizen budget that is programmatic i.e. presented by areas and understandably;

▶ LSGUs to publish reports quarterly for budget implementation, the final account of the municipality for the previous calendar year, as well as information on the debts of the municipality;

▶ LSGUs to publish all documents on public procurement processes on their websites (public procurement plans, calls, decisions, annexes, etc.);

▶ Municipalities to publish the salaries of the elected and appointed officials and the financial information for the trips and representation of the elected and appointed persons and administrative officials;

▶ LSGUs to publish information on public bidding procedures, concessions. It is necessary to ensure transparency within these procedures;

▶ LSGUs to publish data on the financial support they provide to citizens' associations, sports clubs, etc.

Awareness

▶ LSGUs to publish the annual work programs of the municipality and the Council. The documents should enable the setting of measurable goals through developed indicators and guidelines for their measurement;

▶ Municipalities to publish the Development Strategy accompanied by an action plan for implementation (with the allocated budget, established time frame and responsible bodies, departments, public enterprises or institutions, etc.);

▶ Municipalities to publish the prepared planning/program documents for thematic areas such as local economic development, environment, youth, etc.;

▶ Municipalities to harmonize strategic documents with municipal budgets;

▶ The reports on the work of the Mayor and the Council should be published on the website of the LSGU. Reports should contain specific indicators of success and measure the effectiveness of the policies they implement, their degree of implementation and their impact.

Accessibility

▶ On the home page of the websites of the municipalities, there should be a visible special menu or section which will contain the information for exercising the right of free access to public information. There, it is necessary to describe the manner of requesting information, to provide the form to be used and an electronic copy to download it, to indicate the person in charge of information mediation and their contact, as well as to be published the legally established list of public information, etc .;

▶ LSGUs to publish the answers that the municipality has already given to citizens based on access to public information. This information should be published on the website anonymously, to serve other citizens who would request the same information or documents;

▶ Municipalities to have an informant for the citizens (paper or electronic) with which the citizens are provided with information regularly (usually monthly) about the activities of the municipality and the important decisions made by the bodies;

▶ A catalog of services provided by the municipality physically and electronically should be published on the website of the municipalities. For each service, whether provided physically or electronically, it is necessary to publish the forms, the fees to be paid for obtaining the acts and the method of payment;

- LSGUs to list on their websites the documents that the municipality should obtain ex-officio, for the citizens to be released from unnecessary obligations, in the spirit of the one-stop-shop system;

- Municipalities to publish inspection reports on their websites at least once a year;

- LSGUs to timely plan public consultations on various issues planned according to the annual plans and programs of municipal bodies, to publish calls, plans and minutes for public consultations and hearings on their websites;

- Municipal websites to contain electronic form - an opportunity for feedback, special menu for complaints, and reporting problems;

- A date for consultation of the mayor with the citizens should be published on the websites of the municipalities;

- In addition to the official channels, electronically through the website and physically, LSGUs should use social media for two-way communication with citizens. In this sense there should be an official page of the municipality (not a profile of the mayor) on Facebook and some other social media;

- LSGUs to increase the number of digitalized services they offer to the citizens;

- Municipalities to enable citizens to receive relevant information on time, in a way that is understandable to them, which will enable interested citizens to participate in processes that are of interest to the local community and to express their needs and problems.

Integrity

- LSGUs to prepare and publish an appropriate document for prevention of conflict of interest and corrupt practices;

- LSGUs to improve the capacities of the employees for prevention of unethical and corrupt behavior, pointing out irregularities, etc.;

- Municipalities to publish on their websites the Code of Ethics for local officials and administrative officials, as well as the name and contact of the person in charge of protected internal reporting and the person in charge of reporting irregularities in the financial operations of the municipality;

- On the website of the LSGU for each employment procedure to be published a call with a job description, criteria and description of the selection and scoring procedure, as well as a decision for selection with the name and surname of the candidate, explanation and points earned for each criterion;

- Municipalities should regularly publish information on sponsorships and donations.

Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society is an independent, nonpartisan and nonprofit foundation based in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia. Its mission is to contribute towards the development of democracy and towards increasing the quality of life through innovative use and sharing of knowledge. Our guiding values are openness, equality and freedom.

The program areas that Metamorphosis operates in are:
- ▶ Media for Democracy
- ▶ Education for Innovation
- ▶ Social Accountability
- ▶ Human Rights Online

ANNEX 1: STRUCTURE OF THE OPENNESS INDEX AT A LOCAL LEVEL

Category: Transparency	
Sub-category: Commitment to transparency and accountability	
1	Is the website regularly updated?
2	Is the information equally published in all official languages?
3	Is the search button on the homepage of the website functional?
4	Does the municipality have a document (strategy, policy, procedure) regarding openness and transparency?
5	In the last year, did the employees in the municipality attend training or other types of education for access to public information?
6	In the last year, did the employees in the municipality participate in a training/workshop for administrative staff on the concept of open data and instructions on how to use and publish the data in an open format?
7	Has the municipality appointed Open Data Officers?
8	Does the municipality publish open data sets on data.gov.mk?
Sub-category: Organizational information	
9	Is the organization chart of the municipality published on the website?
10	Are the competencies of the municipality published on the website?
11	Is the mayor's biography published on the website?
12	Is the Statute of the municipality published on the website?
13	Are the Rules of Procedure of the Municipal Council published on the website?
14	Is the information about the names, positions and contacts of the administrative officials published on the website?
15	Is the information about the persons hired with works contracts, temporary work contracts and copyright agreements published on the website?
16	Is the information about the members of the Council with name, picture and contact published on the website?
17	Is the list of laws related to the competencies of the municipality published?
18	Is the information on the shares of the municipality in the public enterprises published on the website?
19	Are the names and contacts of the presidents of the local/urban communities published on the website?
20	Is information about the commissions and working bodies of the Council published on the website?

| 21 | Is the statute of the public utility company published? |
| 22 | Is information published about members of the management and supervisory board of the public utility company? |

Sub-category: Decision-making

23	Are the agendas for the Council sessions published on the website?
24	Are the minutes of the Council sessions published on the website?
25	Are the decisions adopted by the Council published on the website?
26	Are Council sessions available live via audio or video?
27	Have any audio/video recordings of the Sessions of the Council in the last year been posted on the website?
28	Has at least one press release/statement from the Council Session in the last three months been published on the website?
29	Are notifications for official meetings published regularly with detailed information from the meeting?

Sub-category: Financial transparency

30	Is the municipal budget for the current year published on the website?
31	Has the municipality published a citizens' budget for the current year?
32	Was the budget decision submitted to the Council before 1 December of the current year?
33	Are quarterly budget implementation reports published?
34	Is the final account published on the website?
35	Is the information on the debts of the municipality published?
36	Are public procurement plans published on the website?
37	Are public procurement calls posted on the website?
38	Are public procurement decisions posted on the website?
39	Are public procurement contracts published on the website?
40	Are the annexes to the public procurement contracts published on the website?
41	Are the annual financial plans and budget execution programs published on the website?
42	Are the reports of the State Audit Office published on the website?
43	Is the salary information of the officials published on the website?
44	Has at least one piece of information on concessions, PPPs or public auctions in the last year been published on the municipality's website?
45	Are the reports on the implementation of the public procurement plan published on the website?
46	Has the municipality published at least one call for projects for civil society organizations in the past year?

47	Are the decisions on the allocated funds for civil society organizations published on the website?
48	Is the annual account of a public utility company published?
49	Has the act determining the prices for the services of a public utility company been published?
50	Has the act for use of the realized revenues of a public utility company been published?
51	Has the final account of the public utility company been published?
52	Is the information on the compensations of the members of the municipal council available to the citizens?
53	Is the rulebook for payment of travel and daily expenses for business trips in the country and abroad for council members and civil servants available to the citizens?

Category: Awareness

Sub-category: Planning and Programming

54	Is the annual program of the municipality for the current year published on the website?
55	Is the annual program of the Municipal Council for the current year published on the website?
56	Are the sectoral municipal strategies (which also apply to the current year) published on the website?
57	Does the municipality have a comprehensive written document where it sets its goals (Development Strategy or Development Plan) which also refers to the current year?
58	Has the municipality published an action plan for the implementation of the Development Strategy?
59	Has an annual investment program for the current year of the public utility company been announced?
60	Does the public utility company use indicators for success in developing the annual program?
61	Does the municipality use indicators of success in developing the annual program?

Sub-category: Monitoring and Evaluation

62	Has the Mayor's work report for the previous year been published on the website?
63	Has the Council's work report for the previous year been published on the website?
64	Has the report on the work of the public utility company for the previous year been published on the website?
65	Does the municipality use success indicators in developing annual performance reports for the previous year?

	Category: Accessibility
	Sub-category: Access to information and services
66	Does the municipality publish the draft detailed urban plans on the territory of the municipality?
67	Does the municipality announce the adopted detailed urban plans on the territory of the municipality?
68	Has the municipality published a register of civil society organizations?
69	Has the municipality published a list of small catering activities?
70	Has the municipality published a list of small-scale tourism activities?
71	Has the municipality published a list of services in rural, ethnic and ecological tourism?
72	Has the municipality published data on the industrial zones on the territory of the municipality?
73	Has the municipality published an Environmental Cadastre?
74	Has the municipality published a Register of issued B-integrated environmental permits?
75	Has the municipality published a Register of Polluters?
76	Has the municipality published a cadastre for noise generators?
77	Has the municipality published a cadastre for waste generators?
78	Has the municipality published data on carriers and motor vehicles for transporting passengers and goods in road traffic?
79	Has the municipality published data on markets in the territory of the municipality?
80	Has the municipality published data on landfills on the territory of the municipality?
81	Has the municipality published data on parking lots on the territory of the municipality?
82	Has the municipality published a register of kindergartens in the municipality?
83	Has the municipality published a register of primary schools in the municipality?
84	Does the municipality publish a register of high schools in the municipality?
85	Has the municipality published data on nursing homes on the territory of the municipality?
86	Are the inspection reports published on the website?
87	Is the information on institutions for the protection of different categories of citizens published on the website?
88	Is the information on the number of social assistance beneficiaries (by categories) published on the website?
89	Is a Waste Register (licenses issued) published on the website?
90	Are the collection centers for electrical and electronic waste published on the website?

91	Are the issued licenses for removal of damaged vehicles from the municipal and local roads published?
92	Has the annual report on issued building permits been published?
93	Has the Register of issued permits for the installation of temporary facilities and urban equipment been published?
94	Has the Register of submitted requests for determining the legal status of illegal objects been published?
95	Has a Register of street names and building numbers, squares, bridges and other infrastructure facilities been published?
96	Has a Register of Residential Building Managers been published?
97	Has the information been published about the sports facilities on the territory of the municipality?
98	Has the information been published about sports clubs?
99	Has a Register of Memorials been published?
100	Has the information been published about the municipal institutions in the field of culture?
101	Has a Register of individuals performing tourist activity, tourist guides and companions been published?
102	Has a Register of categorized catering facilities been published?
103	Are records of caterers published?
104	Is there contact information on the website about the person responsible for accessing public information?
105	Are the answers to the questions for which access to public information has been approved anonymized?
106	Has the procedure (manner) for obtaining public information been published?
107	Does the website have a special menu (section) for the right of access to public information?
108	Does the municipality have its monthly newspaper (or newsletter) (electronic or on paper)?
109	Are the answers to the frequently asked questions published on the website?
110	Is the List of public information published on the website?
111	Are e-services provided on the website?
112	Is the list of services provided by the municipality (physical and electronic) published on the website?
113	Are there templates for accessing the services on the website?
114	Has a tariff plan for the issuance of acts been published?
115	Is the information on the conditions and criteria for using social services and receiving financial assistance published on the website?

116	Is the name and contact of the person in charge of contact with persons with disabilities published?

Sub-category: Public consultations

117	Was the call for participation in the public budget consultation published on the website?
118	Has a public consultation report on the latest draft budget been published on the website?
119	Are the public consultation plans for the current year of the municipality available on the website?
120	Are the calls for public hearings published on the website?
121	Can the necessary information for public hearings from the current year be found on the website?
122	Did the municipality hold public consultations on the latest budget proposal?
123	Are detailed public hearing reports published on the website (with written explanations and responses to comments and suggestions?
124	Does the municipality organize a community forum (or a budget forum, as a form of community forum)?

Sub-category: Interaction with citizens

125	Is there a bureau/office for contact with the citizens?
126	Has the mayor set a reception hour for consultations with the citizens?
127	Does the municipality have an active Facebook profile?
128	Does the municipality have an active profile on other social media?
129	Are the guidelines for submitting complaints posted on the website?
130	Is there a direct online communication channel on the website through which citizens can submit complaints?
131	Are working hours with clients published?
132	In the last year, did the municipality act on the received proposal through any of the tools for civic participation (civic initiative, gathering of citizens, referendum, complaints and proposals)?

Category: Integrity

Sub-category: Integrity and Conflict of Interest Policies

133	Has an integrity plan been published or some other internal anti-corruption practice (which includes measures to prevent and eliminate various forms of corrupt and unethical behavior in an institution)?
134	Is the Code of Ethics for Local Officials and Administrative Officials published on the website?
135	Are the name and contact of the person in charge of protected internal reporting published on the website?

136	Is the name and contact of the person in charge of irregularities posted on the website?
137	Is the information on sponsorships and donations by the municipality published on the website?
138	Are job advertisements and newly hired persons with points in the procedure published in the past 12 months?
139	In the past year, did the employees in the municipal administration attend a training/ workshop or other educational activities on topics such as conflict of interest, prevention of corruption, reporting in case of irregularities?