

Local Participation INDEX – LIPA

2024/2025

Final Report



Transparency Serbia
January/March 2025

Content

About the Index	4
Summary.....	4
Methodology	9
General observations	13
General assessment and prospects for improvement	13
Some of the systemic issues and observations	17
Result LIPA 2024/2025 by LSGs	19
Results of LSGs in certain categories and areas of research.....	20
Examination.....	20
Research Area	22
Preview	22
Area 1: Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies	22
Area 2: Participation in the implementation of regulations and addressing needs.....	23
Area 3: Budget-related participation.....	23
LIPA and LTI – comparison.....	25
Conclusions	27
General conclusions	27
Conclusions – LIPA as a tool.....	27
Explore locally, act nationally.....	29
Recommendations for the improvement of policies, regulations and practices at the national level.....	29
Improving the participation of citizens in the development of the local budget.....	29
Improving the participation of citizens in the preparation of the state budget	30
Improving the position and competencies of local communities	31
Improving the Involvement of Citizens in the Work of the National Parliament – Citizens' Seat in Assembly Committees	32
Improving the participation of citizens in the drafting and monitoring of the implementation of the state budget	32
Recommendations	34
General recommendations	34
Recommendations – LIPA as a mechanism.....	35
Annexes	36
Annex 1. Indicators and explanations of the assessment method	36
Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies.....	36
General part	36

Public Policies	37
Regulations	38
<i>Participation in the implementation of regulations and addressing needs</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>Budget-related participation</i>	<i>40</i>
Financial plans of local communities.....	40
Preliminary Consultation Procedure	40
General Budget.....	42
Small projects	44
<i>Annex 2. Average result by indicators.....</i>	<i>47</i>

About the Index

The Local Participation Index (LIPA), namely the methodology for conducting a survey using the Index, was created in 2022. It is a product of the organization Transparency Serbia, developed as an outcome of contractual engagement with HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation SRB, under the Municipal Economic Development Phase II SRB (Property Tax Reform Programme) project, in the scope of preparations for the implementation of MED Phase III.¹ The index is a tool for measuring, evaluating and ranking local self-government units (LSGs) based on the level of citizen participation in decision-making. The index was applied for the first time in 2022/2023, when the participation of 44 cities and municipalities, included in the Helvetas program, was measured. It is not particularly focused on the specific forms of participation in the decision-making regarding budget spending or the adoption of regulations but also encompasses a broader framework of transparency in the service of participation, i.e., certain areas, activities, and indicators through which everything that can increase trust and encourage citizens to participate is assessed.

The specific calculation method² allows for narrowing down the field of research, changing, adding or removing a certain number of indicators, and even areas, while preserving the basic level of comparability when conducting several consecutive surveys. This was done in the 2024/2025 survey, when the area "Preliminary Consultation Procedure" was introduced instead of the sub-area "Capital Projects" (under the area "Budget-related participation").

The formulation of the Index (i.e. the methodology) relies on the multi-annual experiences and similar studies implemented by Transparency Serbia – the Local Transparency Index (LTI) – used to assess LSGs against the indicators by assigning them 0/1 scores and their ranking in the range between 0 and 100 points, and the Public Enterprises Transparency Index (PETRA) – an assessment of public enterprises based on transparency indicators rated 0/1/2 and ranked by the percentage of the maximum possible score.

Summary

The LIPA Participation Index has increased compared to 2022/2023, but citizens are still insufficiently involved in regulatory procedures, public debates and other mechanisms of local

¹ HELVETAS and Transparency Serbia have shared ownership and copyright over the Participation Index (Methodology) for the duration of the contractual relationship between HELVETAS and Transparency Serbia. After the contractual period, the ownership and copyright over the submitted output belong to Transparency Serbia while Transparency Serbia is obliged to state that methodology is developed within Program "Municipal Economic Development in Eastern Serbia Phase II (Property Tax Reform) - MED II" supported by the Swiss Government.

² More details in the Methodology chapter

self-government functioning. The average score, i.e. the average level of the index in the LIPA 2024/2025 survey is 34.8%, which is 8.4 percentage points higher than in the first survey conducted two years ago (26.4%). This represents a relative increase of almost one-third compared to the result of the first survey (32%). The average score for the observed municipalities and cities has moved from the fifth category (out of six existing ones) "Basic level of participation" to the higher, fourth level "Moderate level of participation".

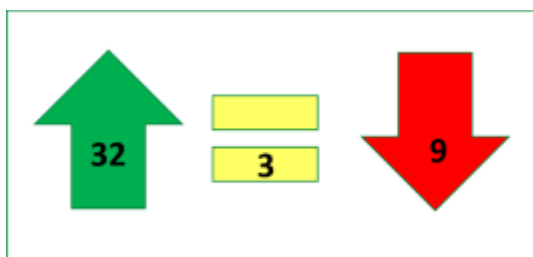
Insufficient involvement of citizens, i.e. low participation, is evident not only through the indicators that measure it directly (such as the indicator *"At least 1/1000 of the total population participated in the public debate on the draft budget - submitted proposals by e-mail or classic mail, attendance at public meetings"*, which stands at 13.6%), but also from the data we found in certain responses and reports during the process of verifying the results. Poor response/participation, poor information and inadequate reporting are interconnected, requiring persistent, consistent, and intensive efforts from LSGs to bring about change. Calls for public debates and information on reports from these debates are still relatively rare on social media platforms, despite these platforms being widely used for communication on other topics.

Participation level	Border levels	Number of LSGUs LIPA 2024/2025	Percentage of the total LSGU number	Number of LSGUs LIPA 2022/2023	Percentage of the total LSGU number
Full participation	80-100%	1	2,3%	0	0%
High participation level	60-80%	1	2,3%	1	2,3%
Developed participation level	45-60%	8	18,2%	0	0%
Moderate participation level	30-45%	16	36,4%	14	31,9%
Basic participation level	15-30%	14	31,8%	20	45,4%
Low participation level	0-15%	4	9,1%	9	20,4%

Unlike LIPA 2022/2023, this year at least one out of the 44 LSGs is in the highest rank of "full participation" (Užice, with 81%). One municipality is in the rank of "high participation" (Veliko

Gradište), and in the "developed participation" category – which had no LSGs in the previous research – there are now eight.

A total of 32 LSGs increased their index, three remained at the same level, and nine recorded a lower index.



When discussing average scores by areas and sub-areas, these values can be used for statistical purposes, but with great reservations and caution, as the scores for individual municipalities and cities vary significantly.

Scores by areas									
Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies				Participation in the implementation and addressing needs	Budget-related participation				Total
General part	Public policies	Regulations	Total		Financial plans of local communities	Previous consultation procedure	General budget	Small projects	
40.5%	65.3%	47.7%	51.9%	22.7%	1.1%	12.2%	52.2%	21.6%	26.8%

There is room to increase participation, i.e. to improve the index, in almost all areas, especially in the sub-areas "involvement of citizens through local communities", "small projects" (which would imply the inclusion of several LSGs), but also in "budget discussions", especially through preliminary consultation procedures.

The conclusion that is imposed, not only in this cycle (and it is identical to the one from two years ago), but also in other similar surveys (LTI, PETRA), is that progress largely depends on political and administrative will, administrative capacities, and that long-term progress requires long-term and thoughtful support from the outside, with nurturing and promoting every achievement.

As stated in LIPA 2022/23, the study creates opportunities for cross-referencing and comparisons between LSGs, individual indicators, areas and categories. This is important when choosing activities/areas to focus on to improve the situation, either by the LSGs themselves,

or through donor support and specific programs and activities. In this research, we went a step further, crossing the results of LIPA 2024/2025 with the results of LTI 2024. More details on this can be found in the dedicated chapter "LIPA and LTI – comparison".

Although it is too early to draw final conclusions after only two cycles, TS believes that LIPA, with proper promotion, can become not only a tool for measuring progress but also a mechanism for encouraging improvement by fostering competition between LSGs, similar to what has been achieved through the continuous implementation of the LTI Index.

Based on the collected data and results, Transparency Serbia, among other things (all recommendations can be found in the chapter "Recommendations"), recommends LSGs to:

- avoid all situations that may create the impression that participation is carried out only formally, such as setting excessively short deadlines, insufficient promotion of invitations and reports on conducted consultations, as well as the results of participation, and scheduling public meetings at inconvenient times (only during working hours, for example);
- make additional efforts to increase the number of citizens participating in public debates on the budget, which refers to more diverse mechanisms in the phase of inviting to debates, but also informing about the results of public debates and the acceptance of citizens' proposals submitted during public debates;
- make additional efforts to increase the number of citizens submitting proposals during the consultation or public consultation process, using mechanisms for collecting proposals such as surveys, questionnaires, etc.;
- adopt action plans for conducting budget consultations by organizing at least two meetings with citizens in local communities;
- specify the obligation to involve citizens in the instruction for direct users of the budget on the development of financial plans;
- apply participatory mechanisms from small projects and to other public tenders for the allocation of funds for natural or legal persons (e.g. energy efficiency for natural persons, media, agriculture, sports associations, religious communities, CSOs);
- clearly separate the segment with public hearings on the websites of LSGs and group together calls, collected proposals and reports that contain justifications for adopting/rejecting the received proposals;

- make it functional or introduce mechanisms for reporting problems and to report publicly on the solution of the problem (building trust as a condition for greater participation). The mechanism should contain a description of what problems can be reported and the deadlines for notifying the procedure/resolution.

Methodology

General methodology

The Local Participation Index (LIPA) is calculated as a percentage of the maximum possible sum of points obtained in the evaluation based on the determined number of indicators/indicator questions. The LIPA 2024/2025 survey used 58 indicators divided into three areas.

The indicators are formulated in such a way as to avoid any subjective influence of the evaluator on the result. A possible score is 0 or 1. Each indicator question includes a quality dimension but measures a quantitative outcome – whether the subject of the question (of appropriate quality) exists or does not exist. Anything that goes beyond this framework - such as some specific solutions, activities, anything that can shed additional light on the quality of participation, contribute to improvement, prevent negative practices or help define recommendations - but cannot be expressed through a binary indicator question, may be included in an additional narrative report that typically accompanies the evaluation and ranking process. Therefore, during the data collection process, researchers note the specific details, which are then used in the accompanying narrative report.

The answers to the indicator questions can be found on the official website of the LSG or on the basis of the response to the request for access to information of public importance that the researcher sends to the LSGs. For certain indicators, it is possible to test the functioning of certain participation mechanisms. In order to avoid LSGs giving "desirable" answers, requests must be formulated in such a way that for a positive assessment it is necessary to attach appropriate evidence (document, link to a place on the internet where the requested information or document can be found). In the absence of such evidence, a positive assessment cannot be given for the indicator.

In order to obtain a more objective picture and to avoid errors that may occur during the collection of data, the data obtained from the website is verified by forwarding a letter to the LSG with a list of negatively evaluated indicators and an invitation to indicate if the requested information/documents are in place. The verification process is especially important from the methodological standpoint if a large number of LSGs is included in the survey/scoring, implying that multiple people are engaged in data collection. Verification, in this case, does diminish the negative effect of human factors on the final score.

For indicators for which no data were obtained from the LSGs in response to the request for access to information of public importance (or no response to the request was received at all), and which cannot otherwise be positively scored with certainty (e.g. based on data found on the website or from other sources available to the researcher) a score of 0 is assigned. In the verification process, it is possible to indicate that no response has been received to the request or to certain questions from the request.

The score remains negative if, during the verification process and in the answers to the requests, the LSG only claims that the answer to the indicator question is positive but without providing evidence (a link, document, or verifiable piece of documentation). In the LIPA 2024/2025 survey, 38 out of 44 LSGs responded to the letters.

The total score for each individual LSG participating in the survey is obtained by adding the number of points assigned to answers to indicator questions (0/1) and by dividing this sum by the theoretical maximum score³. The LSGs are ranked in a table based on their respective scores.

In the table, based on the LIPA score, they are divided into six categories. The highest is the "Full Level of Participation", above 80%, followed by "High Level of Participation" (60-79.9%), "Developed Level of Participation" (45-59.9%), "Moderate Level of Participation" (30-44.9%), "Basic Level of Participation" (15-29.9%) and "Low Level of Participation" (below 15%).

The indicators are divided into three areas and it is possible to calculate partial scores (as a percentage of the maximum sum for each individual area) for each of them. These areas are: „participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies“, „participation in the implementation of regulations and addressing needs“, and „budget-related participation“. The area of „participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies“ has three sub-areas: General Part, public policies and regulations. The area of „budget-related participation“ has four sub-areas: Financial plans of local communities, preliminary consultation procedure, general budget and small projects. This division is also important because of the comparison of LSGs with each other, the comparison of areas or subfields, but also because of the comparability in several research cycles, when the number of indicators has been changed, or when certain areas have been omitted or changed.

The indicators are also marked with the letters I, C and D, indicating the category to which they belong (information, consultation, direct participation). Some indicators can belong to multiple categories simultaneously. Such categorisation is used for additional situational analysis in these categories.

If, during the implementation of several cycles of research and ranking, a cycle with a reduced number of indicators (in order to simplify or reduce the cost of conducting the survey) is compared with another, or if a significant number of indicator questions and/or areas have been changed, it should be borne in mind that there may be a deviation in the overall score. Therefore, a direct conclusion about the rise or fall of individual scores or the overall average score should be made with reservations. When a significant number of indicators are omitted,

³ For example, if the sum is 40 and there are 58 indicators, the final score is $40/58 (\%) = 68.9\%$

the best methodological approach would be to determine what scores the LSGs would have had in the cycle being compared if that research had also been conducted using the reduced number of indicators applied in the current cycle. In the case of indicator changes, this approach is not feasible, so the report should highlight this possible discrepancy. Thanks to the division into areas, those areas where the indicators (in terms of number and formulation) have not been changed are fully comparable through their partial scores, without discrepancies.

LIPA 2024/25 methodology – changes to indicators and subareas based on experience from LIPA 2022/23

Following the LIPA 2022/23 survey, Transparency Serbia have put forward a number of proposals for changing the indicators. This has been discussed with the Helvetas project team and some changes have been made.

In the analysis of the LIPA 2022/23 survey, TS concluded that for the next LIPA survey, it is necessary to more clearly establish the distinction between the public debate on capital projects and the public debate on the budget as a whole on the one hand, and the survey of citizens on investments and/or capital projects within the public debate on the budget on the other. It is therefore proposed to change or add certain indicators. It has been established that there are three forms of occurrence: a survey in which citizens propose what they would like, as part of the budget debate (preliminary consultative procedure); a survey on proposed projects in which citizens can also submit their own proposals; and the public budget debate itself, including capital projects (or solely about capital projects).

Therefore, the sub-area Capital Projects has been removed, and the sub-area “Preliminary consultation procedure” has been introduced instead. Through the sub-area of the general budget, the question was also resolved whether only capital projects or the entire budget were discussed.

In the conclusions of the previous research, it was also pointed out that it is necessary to establish a clear distinction between small projects with citizen participation and small projects with citizen participation financed from property tax revenues. This was done through the precise definition of certain indicators, and especially through the letters for verification in the second survey, where special emphasis was placed on this area. In the LIPA 2022/23 survey, i.e. in the analysis of the research, the question of regular calls for proposals of associations (under item 481 of the economic classification of the budget) was opened, because it was determined from some responses that there were elements of citizen participation that would be scored as positive if they were small projects with citizen participation (e.g. consultations during the preparation of the criteria process or consultations on the announcement of the project or a certain percentage allocated for vulnerable groups

or rural areas). Therefore, additional or modified existing indicators have been introduced in order to valorize this form of participation.

The dilemma regarding the indicator "Is the decision to finance project implemented with citizen participation based on criteria established by an official act?" – specifically, whether it is accepted as positive if the criteria are defined in a public call – has been resolved by awarding a positive score in this case as well.

In the LIPA 2022/23 survey, it was found that the indicator "In addition to the draft budget, an explanation of the budget containing data on the implementation of the budget and the performance of budget programs for the first six months of the current year was published with an invitation for public discussion" was too demanding, and a score of zero was given to some LSGs that attached an extremely detailed explanation of the budget, but not a six-month report on implementation. Therefore, the criterion for this indicator has been softened by the deletion of the second condition ("which contains data on the implementation of the budget and the performance of budget programs for the first six months of the current year").

It was also established that there were situations when LSGs received a positive point because the report on the public debate on the budget states that there were no objections, and a negative point because a large number of proposals were listed, but it was not well explained why some were not accepted. Therefore, through the introduction of an additional indicator, it was additionally stimulated, if there was a proposal at all.

An indicator related to the civic chair has also been introduced as a mechanism for the participation of citizens in the work of the municipal/city assembly.

In the area of participation in relation to the implementation of regulations and addressing needs, the smallest, which contains only four indicators and actually refers to mechanisms for reporting problems and violations of regulations, two indicators have been merged: "Does LSGs have a mechanism for online or SMS reporting of communal problems?" and "Is there an online/SMS mechanism for reporting violations of local regulations or regulations for which local inspections are competent?". A new indicator has been introduced that scores whether the mechanism contains a description of what problems can be reported.

It was observed that the indicators "Have indirect budget beneficiaries conducted open consultations with citizens on how they could plan expenditures for the coming year?" and "Did direct budget beneficiaries (excluding the City/Municipal Administration as a whole) conduct open consultations with citizens on how they could plan expenditures for the coming year before formulating the draft budget?" referred to the indirect budget beneficiaries and the direct budget beneficiaries, and not to the LSGs themselves. They were redefined and assess whether the LSGs have invited the indirect budget beneficiaries and the direct budget beneficiaries to conduct consultations.

General observations

General assessment and prospects for improvement

The LIPA Participation Index has increased compared to 2022/2023, but citizens are still insufficiently involved in regulatory procedures, public debates and other mechanisms of local self-government functioning. Some of the available forms and methods of participation are still not applied, but, on the other hand, even when citizens are invited, it is often the case that they are not interested in engaging in the discussion. The reason for this can be found in the fact that some mechanisms are applied for the sake of form (the researchers found, for example, that on February 27th a call for a public debate was published, which will be held on the same and the next day - February 27th and 28th), or citizens, even when there is a sincere will, still believe that participation is carried out for the sake of form and that they cannot change anything. This belief is often the result of many years (or decades) of negative experiences.

Therefore, in addition to the full and dedicated implementation of participation mechanisms, it is necessary to apply all available means of communication and information, in order to bring these processes closer to citizens.

Expressed in numbers, the average level of the index in the LIPA 2024/2025 survey is 34.8% and it is 8.4 percentage points (i.e. by almost a third - 32% in relative ratio) higher than in the first survey two years ago (26.4%). This means that the average score of the included LSGs from the fifth category (out of six, as explained in the chapter "Methodology") – "Basic level of participation" has moved to the higher, fourth level – "Moderate level of participation". However, it should be borne in mind that a significant part of the growth of the index this year can be attributed to a significantly better average score in the area of "Small projects". This, in turn, is a result of a substantially increased number of municipalities and cities in the sample that have issued calls for project proposals.

Nevertheless, there is reason for greater optimism, as growth has been recorded in most areas and sub-areas. The exceptions are the area of "Participation in the implementation of regulations and addressing needs", where there are only four indicators, related to the mechanisms for reporting problems and irregularities, and the sub-area of the "General part" in "Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies".

The "Financial plans of local communities", also with only four indicators, remained at an unchanged, low level.

A comparison with the sub-area “Preliminary consultation procedure” in relation to LIPA 2022/23, where a slight decrease can be seen in the table, does not give a realistic picture, given that this sub-area was introduced instead of the sub-area “Capital projects” (explained in the chapter Methodology) and these two sub-areas are not (at least not entirely) comparable.

LIPA area			2024/25	2022/23	Absolute growth	Relative growth
Ratings by area	Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies	General part	40.5%	48.5%	-8.0%	-16.4%
		Public policies	65.3%	46.1%	19.2%	41.5%
		Regulations	47.7%	41.3%	6.4%	15.6%
	altogether		51.9%	45.3%	6.6%	14.5%
	Participation in the implementation of regulations and addressing the needs		22.7%	28.4%	-5.7%	-20.0%
	Participation in the budget	Financial plans of the local communities	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%
		Preliminary consultation procedure	12.2%	14.2%	-2.0%	-14.0%
		General budget	52.5%	36.6%	15.9%	43.5%
		Small projects	21.6%	3.0%	18.6%	612.5%
	Total		26.8%	15.9%	10.9%	68.6%

Although the differences are not significant, the category "Informing citizens" (the indicators are divided into the categories "Consulting", "Informing" and "Direct participation") remains the lowest-rated. This supports the conclusion that the effects of participation, even when they exist, are not sufficiently visible.

Insufficient involvement of citizens, i.e. low participation, is evident not only through the indicators that measure it directly (such as the indicator *"At least 1/1000 of the total population participated in the public debate on the draft budget - submitted proposals by e-*

mail or classic mail, attendance at public meetings”, which stands at 13.6%), but also from the data we found in certain responses and reports during the process of verifying the results.

Poor response/participation, poor information and inadequate reporting are interconnected, requiring persistent, consistent, and intensive efforts from LSGs to bring about change. Calls for public debates and information on reports from these debates are still relatively rare on social media platforms, despite these platforms being widely used for communication on other topics.

Unlike LIPA 2022/2023, this year at least one out of 44 LSGs is in the highest rank of "full participation" (Užice, with 81%). One municipality is in the rank of "high participation" (Veliko Gradište), and in the rank of "developed participation", where in the previous survey there was no LSGs, now there are eight of them.

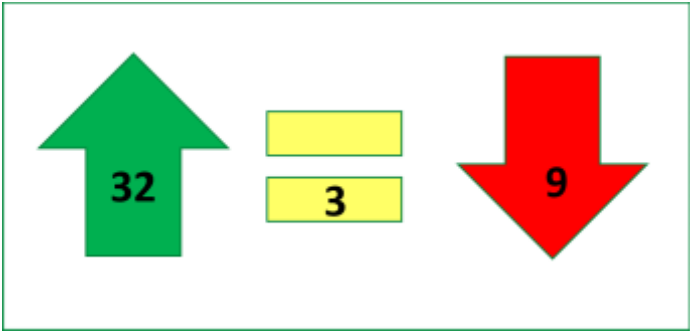
Participation level	Border levels	Number of LSGUs LIPA 2024/2025	Percentage of the total LSGU number	Number of LSGUs LIPA 2022/2023	Percentage of the total LSGU number
Full participation	80-100%	1	2,3%	0	0%
High participation level	60-80%	1	2,3%	1	2,3%
Developed participation level	45-60%	8	18,2%	0	0%
Moderate participation level	30-45%	16	36,4%	14	31,9%
Basic participation level	15-30%	14	31,8%	20	45,4%
Low participation level	0-15%	4	9,1%	9	20,4%

This means that in the upper part of the table, where two years ago there was only one LSG, there are now 10 of them.

At a low level of participation, with an index below 15%, there are now more than half as few municipalities and cities compared to two years ago – four, down from nine. The number of LSGs in the fifth category – basic level of participation – has also decreased. Fourteen

municipalities and cities now fall within the 15-30% range, while the number of those in the 'moderate level of participation' category (30-45%) has increased to sixteen.

In total, 32 LSGs increased the index, three remained at the same level, and nine recorded a lower index.



When it comes to average scores by areas and subareas, they are indicative, especially when compared with other cycles of LIPA surveys, but it should be taken into account that the scores for individual municipalities and cities vary significantly.

Scores by areas									
Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies			Total	Participation in the implementation of regulations and addressing needs	Budget-related participation				Total
General part	Public policies	Regulations			Financial plans of local communities	Previous consultation procedure	General budget	Small projects	
40.5%	65.3%	47.7%	51.9%	22.7%	1.1%	12.2%	52.2%	21.6%	26.8%

Thus, in this year's survey, the highest average score is in the area of "Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies" – with 51.9%, but the average was obtained from scores ranging from 10.5 to 94.7%. This means that in this area, with a large number of LSGs, there is significant room for work and improvement in order to bring the participation of grades to at least 50%. Although this average has risen from 45% two years ago, it is still not at a satisfactory level. Examples of good practice for those who want to advance can be easily found, because 16 LSGs have an index above 60%, and among them nine have an index above 70%.

The area "Participation in the implementation of regulations and addressing needs" includes only four indicators related to mechanisms for reporting problems and violations. The average score is 22.4%, with slightly more than half (25 LSGs) having a 0% rating, while only one has the maximum score.

"Budget-related participation" has an average of 26.8%, and individual scores vary from 0 (in two cases) to 71.4%. Five LSGs have a participation index above 45%, placing them in the top three categories in this area.

There is room for increasing participation, i.e. improving the index, in almost all areas and sub-areas, and this especially applies to the sub-areas of citizen involvement through local communities, in small projects (which would imply the involvement of several LSGs), but also in budget discussions, especially through preliminary consultation procedures.

The conclusion that is imposed, not only in this cycle (which is identical to the findings from two years ago), but also in other similar studies (LTI, PETRA) is that progress largely depends on political and administrative will, as well as administrative capacity. Achieving progress requires long-term and strategic external support, along with fostering and promoting every accomplishment.

Some of the systemic issues and observations

As the goal of any additional external engagement and support for certain quality practices is to ensure sustainability in the municipalities where they are implemented and to expand their application, it is important to pay attention to cases that indicate that there is a risk that good practices may be discontinued once direct support ends or that the positive results of new practices may not be replicated. Thus, in several LSGs that implement "Small projects", i.e. issuing calls for proposals, having previously organized consultations with citizens regarding the areas, criteria and the program as a whole, it has been noticed that identical (good) practices are not applied to other calls for proposals. In some cases, TS received explanations that such consultations were not mandatory because they are not required by the laws regulating the public calls. From a simplified perspective, there is no law for "small projects" that prescribes mandatory consultations, but this is expected (and evaluated) within the framework of project support. In such a situation, an effective solution would be to prescribe the obligation to organize consultations, either by a national regulation or by an act adopted at the level of LSGs. In the absence of such an act, and in cases where good practice is initially introduced because the donor expects it, LSGs should consider the possibilities of applying good practices in other similar situations, to further nurture them for the sake of citizens and trust in the local administration, rather than merely to meet donor expectations.

Calls for proposals, especially those for "small projects", are often published in the "News" section of websites. This, of course, is good for the sake of greater visibility, but it is a problem if they are not published at the same time in the segments "Public calls", "Calls for proposals", etc. This raises the suspicion that LSGs perceive "Small Projects" as something exceptional (or perhaps even temporary). The reason, of course, could also be much more trivial – that the same officials are not in charge of the 'regular' calls for proposals and the 'small projects'. When invitations, and later separately other acts, decisions, are published only among current

affairs and news, which are often numerous, it is very difficult to find information after a few months. TS researchers sometimes failed to find information about 'small projects', which they then received from LSGs in the verification process. Ensuring that information about already completed calls is easily accessible is important so that those who previously did not apply or were unaware of these projects – but would like to apply in a future cycle – can easily find all the documentation and relevant details in one place.

Many opportunities and mechanisms for participation are still underutilized. This primarily refers to hybrid public debates (in-person meetings combined with online participation) and the use of social media for participation. The first mechanism would also allow citizens from remote parts of the LSGs to get involved more easily. Social media platforms have great potential for boosting participation, but they are almost exclusively used to inform about the activities of the political leadership and to publish service information. There is still little or non-existent participation in the various phases of budgeting (financial plans of the indirect budget beneficiaries and the direct budget beneficiaries, preliminary consultation procedure). Citizens' trust and the level of participation are strongly linked. The low interest is mainly due to low trust – partly due to the long-term absence of an offer to participate in decision-making, the belief that participation is actually "participation", that it is carried out only for the sake of form, but also due to the fact that the effects of participation, even when they really exist, are not sufficiently visible due to insufficient promotion.

The websites of LSGs are still often outdated (with separate banners or menu sections for one-time actions or listings of calls for proposals, public hearings/debates or budgets from several years ago), making it difficult to find what is truly important, current and relevant in the excess of information.

Result LIPA 2024/2025 by LSGs

One of the 44 LSGs included in the research is in the "Full participation" range (above 80%), one is in the "High participation" range (60-79.9%), and eight are in the "Developed participation" range (45-59.9%). The average index is 34.8%, which is in the range of "Moderate participation" (30-44.9%). There are 16 LSGs in this range. At the level of "Basic participation" (15-29.9%) there are 14 LSGs, and four LSGs have less than 15% ("Low level of participation"). In addition to Užice and Veliko Gradište, Zaječar, Topola, Mali Zvornik, Novi Pazar and Leskovac also stand out with results above 50%.

	LIPA 2024/2025	Ranking - level of participation 2024/25
Užice	81.0%	Full
Veliko Gradište	67.2%	High
Zaječar	56.9%	Developed
Topola	53.4%	
Mali Zvornik	51.7%	
Novi Pazar	51.7%	
Leskovac	51.7%	
Trstenik	46.6%	
Sombor	46.6%	
Raška	46.6%	
Bor	43.1%	Moderate
Velika Plana	41.4%	
Žabalj	41.4%	
Knjaževac	39.7%	
Ražanj	39.7%	
Ćuprija *	39.7%	
Golubac	37.9%	
Bač	36.2%	
Bojnik	36.2%	
Vlasotince	34.5%	
Varvarin	32.8%	
Sokobanja	32.8%	
Arilje	32.8%	
Ljubovija	32.8%	
Bečej	32.8%	
Pirot	32.8%	

	LIPA 2024/2025	Ranking - level of participation 2024/25
Žabari	29.3%	Basic
Negotin *	29.3%	
Petrovac na Mlavi	27.6%	
Arandjelovac	27.6%	
Nova Varoš	27.6%	
Batočina	25.9%	
Srbobran	25.9%	
Aleksandrovac *	25.9%	
Rača	22.4%	
Paraćin	22.4%	
Temerin	20.7%	
Vrnjačka Banja *	20.7%	
Svilajnac *	17.2%	Low
Odžaci	15.5%	
Kladovo *	13.8%	
Bogatić	13.8%	
Brus	12.1%	
Kula	12.1%	

Note: LSGs that implemented small projects are marked in yellow. An asterisk indicates LSGs that did not respond to the verification letters. Vrnjačka Banja responded late, so the score for that municipality would probably have been higher if the response had come before the report was finalized.

Results of LSGs in certain categories and areas of research

Examination

The highest average score is in the area of "Participation in adopting regulations and public policies" - 51.9%. It should be taken into account that there are huge variations – scores in this area vary between 10.5 and 94.7%, so that in a larger number of LSGs there is significant room for work and improvement in order to bring the participation of scores to at least 50% of the set standards. Although this average is higher than the 45% recorded two years ago, the index is still not satisfactory. Examples of good practice can be easily found, since 16 LSGs have an index above 60%, and among them nine above 70%.

The domain "Participation in the implementation of regulations and addressing needs" includes four indicators related to mechanisms for reporting problems and violations. The average score is lower than two years ago and amounts to 22.4%, with slightly more than half (25 LSGs) having a 0% rating, and only one has the maximum score.

"Budget-related participation" has a low average of 26.8%, but this is also an increase from 15.9% in the survey two years ago. Individual scores range from 0 (in two cases) to 71.4%. Five LSGs have LIPA of more than 45%, which puts them in the top three categories in this area. The growth in this area was achieved thanks to a significant growth in the sub-areas "General budget" and "Small projects", where the number of LSGs that announced and implemented calls for proposals has increased several times over.

Average ratings by category do not indicate that there is a particular problem in any of the segments that would consequently "pull" the index down or up. The category "Information" (16 indicators) has the lowest average of 28.8%, "Direct inclusion" (19 indicators) very close to 29.8%, and "Consultation" (36 indicators) slightly higher – 35.2%.

Chart: Average scores for 44 LSGs by categories

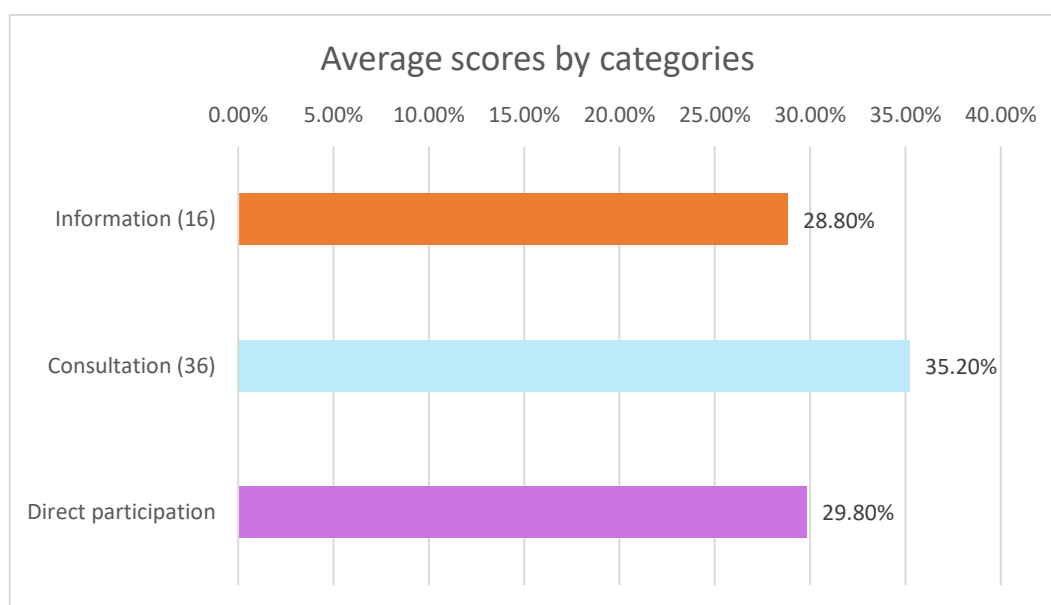
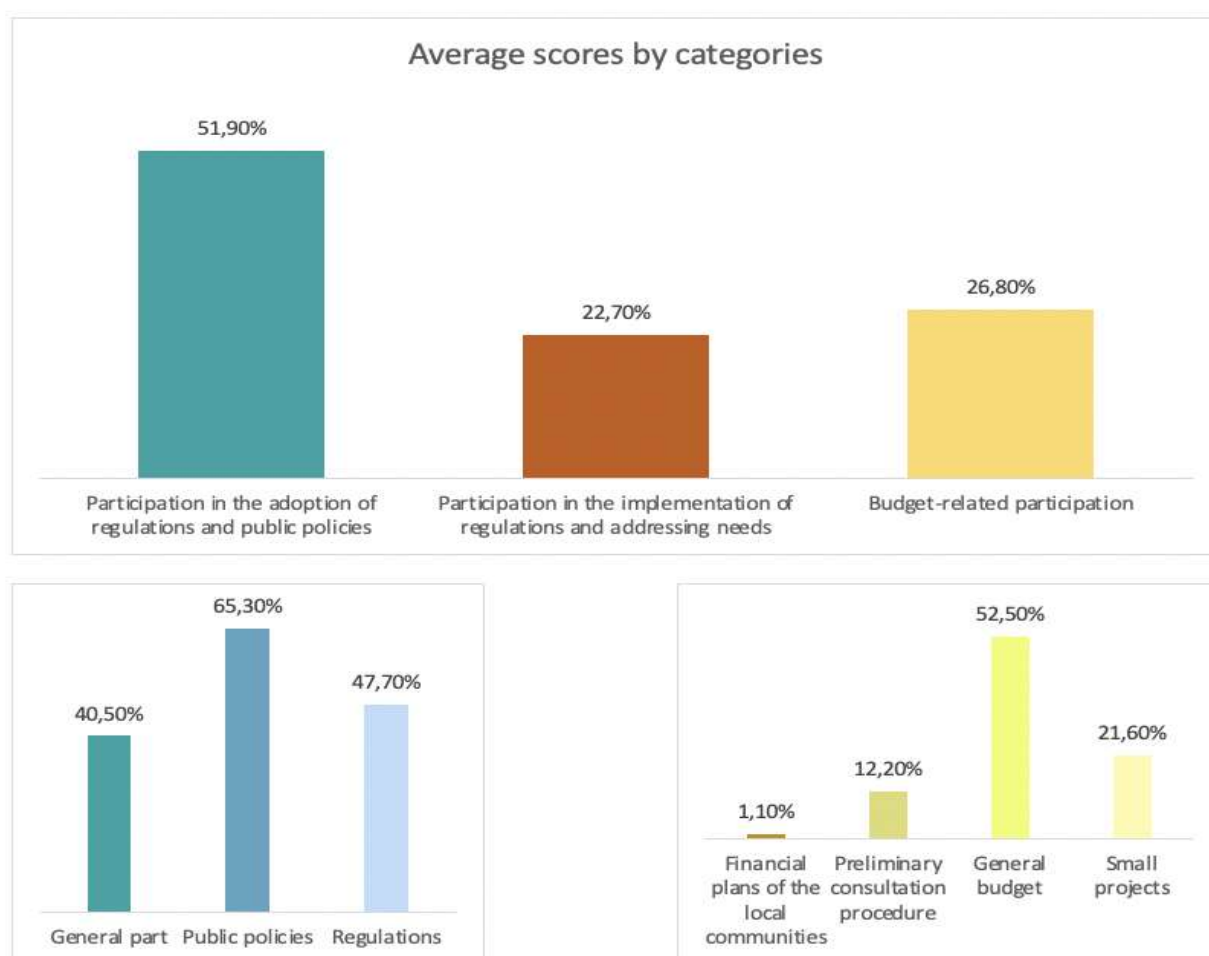


Chart – average scores of 44 LSGs by areas and subareas



Research Area

Preview

LIPA examines transparency across eight broadly defined areas. The number of indicators in the areas varies significantly, which affects the overall weight that each area's score has on the total average. The area "Participation in regulations and public policies" has three sub-areas and 19 indicators, the area "Participation regarding the implementation of regulations and addressing needs" has only four indicators and does not contain sub-areas, while the area "Budget-related participation" has four sub-areas and in total includes almost two-thirds of the indicators and carries the greatest "weight" in LIPA.

Table: Achieved average score of LSGs by areas

	Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies	Participation in the implementation of regulations and addressing needs	Budget-related participation
Number of indicators	19	4	35
The weight of the area given the number of indicators	33/100	7/100	60/100
Average score	51,9%	22,7%	26,8%

Area 1: Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies

The area "Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies" includes three sub-areas with an equal number of indicators and an equal impact on the overall score in this area:

Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies			
Sub-area:	General part	Public policies	Regulations
Number of indicators in the sub-area:	6 indicators	7 indicators	6 indicators
Average sub-area score:	40,5%	65,3%	47,7%

The 'general part' refers to referenda, people's initiatives and direct citizen participation in working bodies discussing the local assembly decisions. The sub-area "Public policies" encompasses indicators referring to public hearings on public policies, strategic acts, while "Regulations" includes indicators related to public hearings on regulations (except for public hearings on the budget).

As can be seen from the table, a slightly higher average is recorded in discussions about public policies, strategic acts. On the other hand, within each of the sub-areas, there is significant variation between the lowest and highest scores. For the 'General part', the variations are from 16.7% to 83.3%, for 'Public policies' variations are extreme from 0 (one LSG, while two years ago there were as many as six) to 100% (five LSGs, two years ago there were two), as well as for 'Regulations', where 0% have was scored by six LSGs (there were eight of them) and 100% was scored by three LSGs (there were two).

A total score above 70% in this area is earned by Užice (94.7%), Sombor (84.2%), Topola (78.9%), Zajecar (78.9%), Veliko Gradište (78.9%), Knjazevac (73.7%), Velika Plana (73.7%), Mali Zvornik (73.7%) and Novi Pazar (73.7%).

Area 2: Participation in the implementation of regulations and addressing needs

This area includes only four indicators, and the scores are 0, 25, 50 or 100%. None of the positive indicators (0%) was recorded in 25 LSGs, which accounts for more than half of the LSGs included in this survey. The maximum score was only reached by Užice.

Area 3: Budget-related participation

Budget-related participation				
Sub-area:	Financial plans of local communities	Preliminary consultative procedure	General budget	Small projects
Number of indicators in the sub-area:	4 indicators	8 indicators	11 indicators	12 indicators
Specific sub-area weight:	11/100	23/100	31/100	34/100
Average sub-area score:	1,1%	12,2%	52,5%	21,6%

The sub-area 'Financial plans of local communities' refers to informing citizens and inviting them to participate in consultations during the preparation of development programs and financial plans of local communities. This is still the area with the lowest score and significant work is needed with representatives of local communities and with reference persons and

authorities in LSGs in order to improve the situation in this area. The only positive score in this area is Pirot.

The sub-area 'Preliminary consultative procedure' was created because, during the LIPA 2022/23 research, it was observed that the understanding of public debates on capital projects (previously a separate area) varied significantly between LSGs. Additionally, many responses (and findings by TS researchers) included data on surveys and other forms of consultation conducted prior to drafting the budget. The average score in this sub-area is 12,2%, ranging from 0 to 62,5% among LSGs. Indicator-specific scores range from 0% (e.g., whether the public call for debate or the survey notice included criteria for evaluating citizens' proposals and deciding on the implementation of projects or expenditures considered) to 27,4% for the basic indicator – whether a preliminary consultative procedure was organized at all (i.e., whether a consultation or public hearing – such as a survey on projects or capital investments, or citizen input on what should be funded – was conducted before drafting the budget).

31 LSGs have a score of 0% in this sub-area, which means that they did not organize a preliminary consultation procedure.

Within this area, the best results are found in the sub-area 'General budget', with an average score of 52,2%, which is at the threshold of satisfactory. Scores range from 0% (four LSGs) to 100% (one LSG – Veliko Gradište). In addition to Veliko Gradište, other municipalities with high scores in this area include Trstenik (91%), and Bor, Užice, Petrovac na Mlavi, and Aleksandrovac (each with 82%).

The sub-area 'Small projects' includes indicators related to the planning, announcement, evaluation and information related to small projects that are implemented with the participation of citizens, whether they are financed from property tax revenues or from other sources. It should be noted that 'Small projects' do not apply to calls for the projects of associations. Fifteen LSGs have issued such calls, with an average score of 21,6%, and among those that did, the scores range from 16,7% to 91,7%

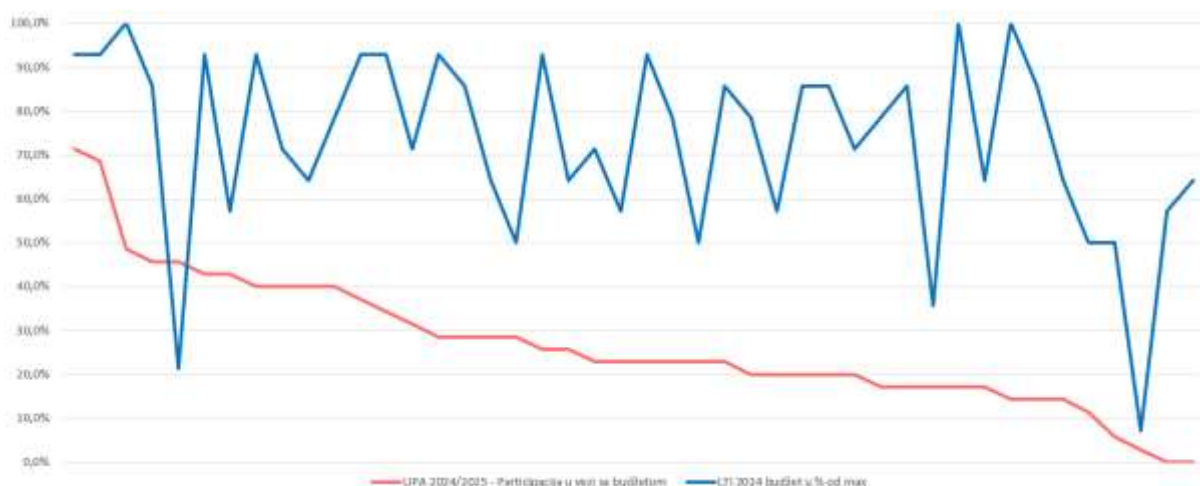
LIPA and LTI – comparison

In this cycle of research, TS compared the results of two indices it investigates, both of which evaluate and rank LSGs: LIPA measures participation, while LTI (Local Government Transparency Index) measures transparency. The comparison was made for 44 LSGs covered by the LIPA research (LTI covers all 170 cities, municipalities, and city municipalities).

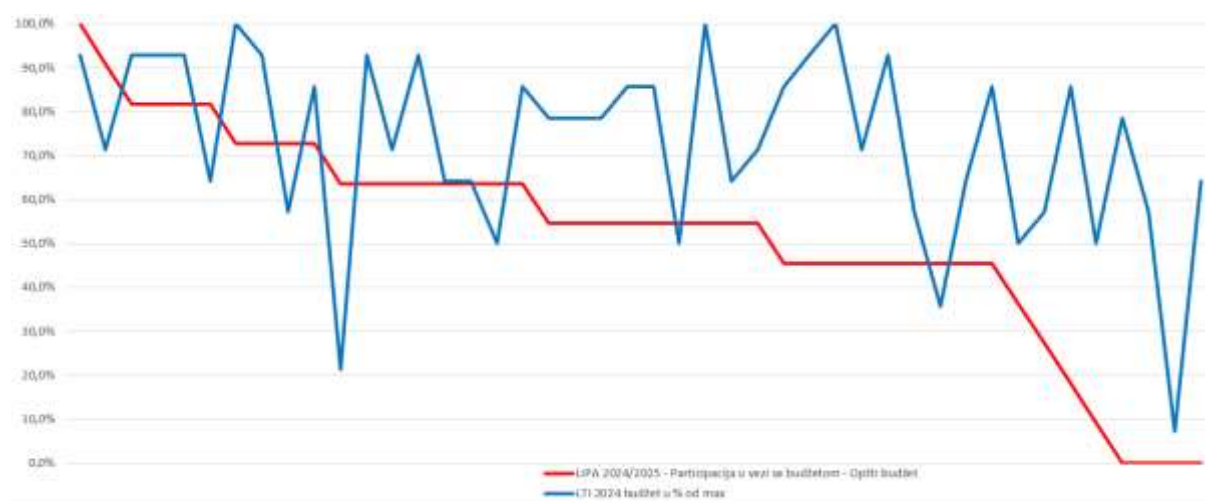
The comparison was made through three crossings. In the first one, the overall indices were compared – LIPA 2024/2025 and LTI 2024. The red curve on the graph below indicates the LIPA index and the results are arranged in descending order, while the blue curve indicates the LTI index for these same LSGs. As shown in the graph, it is evident that LSGs with higher LIPA scores also tend to have higher LTI scores. Thus, the LTI generally follows the downward trend of the LIPA curve, though there are significant and not infrequent individual deviations – both above and below.



This correlation disappears if we compare the scores for LSGs in the area of "Budget-related participation" (red curve) with their scores for budget transparency (partial index, recalculated in relation to the maximum number of points in the Budget category) – blue curve in Chart 2.



The situation is similar when comparing the sub-area "Budget" from LIPA 2024/2025 (red curve) with the assessments for budget transparency (partial index, recalculated in relation to the maximum number of points in the Budget category) – blue curve in Chart 3.



A strong link between good results in participation and transparency, especially when looking at the budget area separately, cannot be established in this crossover. There is a certain correlation in the overall scores, which can be attributed to the efforts of LSGs that achieve good results to do so in all areas, i.e. a negligent attitude towards both areas in the case of those that are closer to the lower part of the table in both surveys.

Conclusions

General conclusions

There is a strong connection between low participation and poor information about participation, and long-term and intensive activity of LSGs is needed to change the situation. Communication channels through social media platforms are still insufficiently used for reporting on public hearings and calls for proposals – from invitations and notifications that the call for proposal has been announced to the distribution of information on reports from public hearings and the implementation of calls. At the same time, social media platforms are used to inform about other topics. Therefore, in addition to the full and dedicated implementation of participation mechanisms, it is necessary to apply all available means of communication and information, in order to bring these processes closer to citizens.

To avoid further undermining trust and reducing participation, it is important to avoid formalistic or one-off implementation of participation-related activities. This applies to the duration of public debates, the approach to collected proposals, and the quality of reporting. There is room for increasing participation, i.e. improving the index, in almost all areas and sub-areas, and this especially applies to the sub-areas of citizen involvement through local communities, through small projects (which would imply the involvement of more LSGs), but also budget discussions, especially through preliminary consultation procedures.

The inevitable conclusion is that progress depends to a large extent on political, but also administrative, will and administrative capacity, and that progress requires long-term and thoughtful external support, while nurturing and promoting every achievement.

It is still noticed that the websites of LSGs are often not up-to-date - banners or parts of the menu for one-time actions or displays of calls for proposals, public debates or budgets from several years ago are separated, which makes it difficult to find relevant information.

Conclusions – LIPA as a tool

Through research, LIPA also reveals facts about itself. It has been confirmed that this mechanism has the quality of comparability and improvement. TS believes that LIPA, through appropriate promotion, can also become a mechanism for encouraging (and not just measuring progress) by developing competition between LSGs, as has been achieved with the LTI index.

The results of the LIPA research open up room for numerous crossovers and comparisons – between LSGs, individual indicators, areas, categories, which is important for directing support to LSGs and certain activities/areas to which the donor wants to devote. In this research, TS compared the results from the LIPA survey (overall score, score for the area "Budget-related participation" and sub-area "General budget") with the LTI survey that

measures and evaluates the transparency of LSGs – LTI as a whole and the score in the "Budget" category, calculated as a percentage of the maximum number of points.

A certain level of correlation has been found between the two indices as a whole, but with large and not a few deviations both downwards and upwards. Some of the LSGs that had a high LIPA score also had a high LTI, but the opposite examples were also observed.

This is especially true for comparisons by categories, i.e. areas related to the budget, where there is practically no correlation.

Explore locally, act nationally

Recommendations for activities at the national level based on the Local Participation Index (LIPA)

The experiences from the LIPA 2022/23 and LIPA 2024/25 surveys have created room not only for recommendations directed at LSGs (as well as internal recommendations for improving the research itself), but also for formulating recommendations for actors operating at the national level. These involve proposals for adopting appropriate policies, regulations, and governance practices, and they relate to two-way local-national interaction: those that can enhance participatory practices at the local level, and those – based on local-level experience – that can improve practice (and/or regulations) at the national level.

In formulating the recommendations, the primary basis was the experience gained from the LIPA research (both cycles), and the relevant indicators related to each recommendation are also listed. However, experiences from other research conducted by TS at the local level - with support from the SDC and the Helvetas program, as well as other donors (work with local communities, improvement of public hearing processes, Local Government Transparency Index)- were also taken into account, along with other studies and findings at the national level.

Recommendations for the improvement of policies, regulations and practices at the national level

Improving the participation of citizens in the development of the local budget

Authorities/institutions responsible for the recommendation: Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Governments in cooperation with the Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia.

To create a stronger legal basis for organizing timely consultations with citizens regarding the adoption of the local budget, based on the findings of LIPA, as well as other experiences

The current provisions of the Law on local self-government envisage the obligation of cities and municipalities to regulate the holding of a public debate on the capital part of the budget by their statutes or general acts. In practice, LSGs mostly decide to regulate public debates by a general act, not only on the capital part, but on the entire budget, with significant differences in the way they do so. Minimum standards for quality public debate (e.g. in terms of deadlines) should be set by law. In the absence of legal rules, a significant contribution to standardization was made by the Standing Conference of Cities and Municipalities, by developing a model decision, which can also be improved on the basis of experiences (both good and bad) from

practice. To a certain extent, the acts that were adopted on the basis of the Law on the planning system, are also helpful.

The current provisions of the Law on the budget system, in the part relating to the calendar of budget preparation at the local level, do not recognize either public debate or any other form of consultation with citizens in the preparation of local budgets. Moreover, these deadlines, set in Article 31, are at the expense of organizing a quality public debate, because November 1st is set as the deadline for the submission of the draft decision on the budget, and November 15th as the (final) deadline for the adoption of the proposal of that decision.

Improving the participation of citizens in the preparation of the state budget

Authorities/institution responsible for recommendation: Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Governments

Based on the findings of LIPA (but also other experiences, such as the Open Budget Index - OBI), to enable greater participation of citizens in the preparation of the budget

The Law on the budget system proclaims transparency as one of its principles but does not elaborate on it sufficiently. Even when transparency is ensured by the publication of certain documents during the preparation of the budget, there are no mechanisms that would allow citizens to influence the content of the budget with their proposals. On the other hand, in all local self-governments there are formal mechanisms for public debate and other forms of consultation on the budget, as well as a number of good practices in this regard.

The Law on State administration provides for the obligation to conduct a public debate on any law that significantly changes the situation in a certain area or for which there is public interest, and each new state budget meets both of these criteria. Although the budget is adopted in the form of a law, in practice this norm has never been implemented. Such a situation requires the need to specify the rules in the Law on public administration regarding the budget public debate (and consequently, in the Rules of procedure of the Government of the Republic of Serbia), and to further elaborate them through the Law on the budget system and a special bylaw that would be adopted after the introduction of the relevant provision into that law. There is no obstacle for this elaboration to be carried out solely through a corresponding amendment to the Law on the budgetary system (without amending the Law on state administration).

Bearing in mind the complexity of the process of adopting the state budget, it would be appropriate for the public hearing and other forms of consultations with the interested public to be conducted in the earlier stages of preparation, and not only at the moment when the draft law on the budget for the next year is drafted. In other words, it would be more

expedient for the budget consultation process to be carried out separately by each direct budget beneficiary, before submitting its financial plan proposal to the Ministry of Finance. In addition to these most important changes, the part of the Law (Article 31) relating to the budget calendar of the national government should also be amended.

In addition to consultations with the public regarding the state budget in general, the experience from the LIPA research, as well as the current rules at the local level, indicate a particularly large room for improvement when it comes to capital national projects.

Namely, at the moment, the local level of government is prescribed the obligation to organize a public debate on the capital part of the budget. On the other hand, the Regulation on capital projects, which governs the preparation and adoption of such projects, does not include a requirement to consult the public, and the rules are also insufficient regarding transparency. Therefore, there is both a need and an opportunity to use this regulation to specify how the public should be consulted during the preparation of these projects – something that can be done without amending the Law on the budget system. In formulating the modalities of consultation, experiences from numerous LSGs can be applied.

Measures in this area are also important for numerous planning documents that the Republic of Serbia implements, but where the problem is not sufficiently recognized (e.g. Open government partnership, public finance reform programs).

Relevant LIPA indicators: 28-46 (a list of all indicators is in the annex to the report)

Improving the position and competencies of local communities

Authorities/institution responsible for the recommendation: Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Governments, Ministry of Finance

Within LIPA, but also through other activities on the project, TS has noticed a number of issues that should be resolved regarding the position and functioning of local communities, where part of the problem can be solved through amendments to the Law on local self-government. It is primarily important to resolve the issue of the legality of the work of local communities, which is currently not ensured, and which can be done by introducing an adequate system of accountability of managers in local self-governments, as well as through the possible introduction of financial mechanisms (denial of national transfers in case of non-compliance with the legal obligation to establish local self-government bodies in accordance with the law). Equally important, it is necessary to pay attention to other mechanisms for better recognition of local communities in the decision-making process within local self-governments. In this regard, due to the great impact of these documents, special attention should be paid to the changes to the model acts published by the Standing Conference of Cities and Municipalities

(the process of revising the model of the Decision on public hearings is currently open, in which the TS will contribute).

Relevant LIPA indicators: 24-27 (a list of all indicators is in the annex to the report)

Improving the Involvement of Citizens in the Work of the National Parliament – Citizens' Seat in Assembly Committees

Body/institution responsible for recommendation: National Assembly

One of the mechanisms that exists in some municipalities, but not in the national assembly, is the "citizens' seat". Similarly, in the current convocation and the recent experience of the National Assembly, other mechanisms of civic participation (e.g. public hearings) do not function adequately. In this regard, it is necessary to initiate amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly, in order to provide for new mechanisms of civic participation, but also to elaborate on the existing ones.

Relevant LIPA indicators: 5 and 6 (a list of all indicators is in the annex to the report)

Improving the participation of citizens in the drafting and monitoring of the implementation of the state budget

Authorities/institutions responsible for the recommendation: Government of the Republic of Serbia, ministries that announce competitions for the allocation of funds or monitor the allocation of these funds (Ministry of Social Dialogue), Council of the Government of Serbia for Cooperation with Civil Society.

Recommendation: Enable public consultation in determining the areas in which the realization of the public interest will be financed from the budget through the programs of associations (at all levels).

The practice of conducting competitions for the allocation of funds, both at the national and at the provincial and local level, can be significantly improved. Improvements are needed at the normative level, but also in terms of the capacity of the bodies that monitor how projects are implemented, and whether the goal of financing is being achieved. No less important, practice shows that in many cases it is necessary to examine the legality and responsibility for possible abuses. In addition to all these important issues, additional attention should be paid to the involvement of citizens, i.e. strengthening participation when it comes to determining the public interest that will be financed in this way in a certain environment or area. The experience of some local self-governments shows that such consultations are possible and necessary.

Therefore, it would be necessary to provide for the obligation to conduct consultations on this part of the budget, as part of the consultation process on the budget, at the level of individual national ministries, provincial secretariats and city and municipal administrations.

Relevant LIPA indicators: 47, 50 and 56 (a list of all indicators is in the annex to the report)

Recommendations

General recommendations

Oblige local self-governments to hold regular consultations with local communities and to involve them in the process of budget consultations

Local self-governments should adopt action plans for holding budget consultations by organizing at least two meetings with citizens in local communities

Local self-governments should publish reports on all meetings in local communities and on the results of budget consultations on their websites

Specify the obligation to involve citizens in the instruction to direct budget users on the development of financial plans.

Apply participatory mechanisms from small projects and to other calls for the allocation of funds for natural or legal persons (e.g. energy efficiency, media, agriculture, sports, religious communities, CSOs).

Avoid all situations that may create the impression that participation is carried out only formally - short deadlines, unambiguous promotion of invitations as well as reports, and then the results of participation, scheduling public meetings at inappropriate times (only during working hours, for example)

Make additional efforts to increase the number of citizens participating in public debates on the budget, which refers to more diverse mechanisms in the phase of inviting to debates, but also informing about the results of public debates and the adoption of citizens' proposals involved in public debates.

Make additional efforts to increase the number of citizens submitting proposals during the consultation process or public consultation, using mechanisms for collecting proposals such as surveys, questionnaires, etc.

Clearly separate the segment with public debates on the websites of LSGs and group the calls for participation in one place or section, collected proposals and reports that contain explanations for adopting/rejecting the received proposals.

With the invitation to public debates on the budget, publish the explanation of the budget. Progress (where any) made in reporting on public debates on the budget should be applied to other public hearings. Expand public debates beyond the framework marked as mandatory in the Law on Local Self-Government.

Clearly separate public debates (or consultations) and citizens' surveying or public opinion polls on plans for capital investments, aligned with strategic documents, from surveys and statements on smaller projects.

Make functional or introduce mechanisms for reporting problems and reporting publicly on problem solving (building trust as a condition for greater participation). The mechanism should contain a description of what problems can be reported and the deadlines for notifying the procedure/resolution.

Recommendations – LIPA as a mechanism

Based on the findings and insights in the data collection process, consider the need and possibilities for further improvement and/or methodological simplification of data collection and processing – through (re)definition of certain indicators and/or areas, definition of questions for data collection from LSGs and (re)definition of evaluation criteria in the data processing process.

Annexes

Annex 1. Indicators and explanations of the assessment method

Participation in the adoption of regulations and public policies

General part

- 1. In the past three years, the LSG acted upon a people's initiative and/or announced a referendum. (D)**

This indicator is determined based on the requests for access to information – filed initiatives and data on subsequent actions are to be provided.

- 2. In the past three years, the LSG did not violate regulations regarding the actions in connection with the referendum and people's initiative. (D)**

This indicator is determined based on the request for access to information – the data about actions taken is to be provided to determine whether the LSG acted in line with the procedures and time frames set in the law/decreed.

- 3. Does any LSG act particularly envisage the inclusion of vulnerable groups in public hearings and other forms of citizen participation? (C)**

This indicator is determined based on the request for access to information – filed initiatives and data on subsequent actions are to be provided.

- 4. Was the inclusion of vulnerable groups in public hearings and other forms of citizen participation implemented last year? (C)**

This indicator is determined by checking the website and/or the request for access to information – calls to public hearings and reports of public hearings are to be provided.

- 5. Have the representatives of the citizens been appointed to working bodies (councils, commissions) of the City/Municipal Assembly, and have they participated in the work of these bodies? (D)**

This indicator is determined by reviewing the minutes of the meetings of the working bodies, or by requesting the submission of the minutes of the meetings of the working bodies to which citizens have been elected. For a positive assessment, it is necessary that they have participated in the work of at least one working body.

- 6. Is the existence of a 'citizen' chair in the City/Municipal Assembly foreseen by the rules of procedure or another act (agreement, memorandum of cooperation)? (D)**

This indicator is determined by reviewing the rules of procedure. If the rules of procedure are not available, a request is made for the rules of procedure or the specific information from the rules or another mentioned act.

Public Policies

7. Was in the previous three years at least one public hearing delivered in line with the regulations defining the drafting of public policy documents during the preparation of the public policy documents (strategies, action plans)? (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports of public hearings, news on the delivered public hearing) or based on the request for access to information if such information cannot be found on the website. The invitation to public hearing, report or the link to the news on the delivered public hearing is to be provided.

8. Was the report of the public hearing on the public policy documents' drafting published, containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of proposals submitted during the public hearing? (I) (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website. For the positive score to be awarded, the report needs to contain the data on the submitted proposals and rationales for their adoption/rejection. The report or news per se does not imply a positive score.

9. The LSG did not adopt a single public policy in the past three years without organising a public hearing beforehand. (C)

This indicator is determined by cross-checking the data obtained based on the two requests- for the provision of information on the public policies adopted in the past three years and for the provision of data on public hearings organized in the past three years.

10. The LSG published the reports of all public hearings on public policies organized in the past three years containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of proposals submitted during the public hearings. (I) (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website. For the positive score to be awarded, all reports need to contain the data on the submitted proposals and rationales for their adoption/rejection. The reports or news per se do not imply a positive score, nor if the reports of specific hearings were published, while they were lacking for others (at least one).

11. Was a public hearing organized when the latest sustainable development strategy was adopted? (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (is the strategy in place, when was it adopted, is the public hearing report available?) or based on the data from the request seeking information on all public policies adopted in the past three years (if by checking the website it was determined that the strategy was adopted in the past three years) or special request.

- 12. Was the report of the public hearing on the sustainable development strategy containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of proposals submitted during the public hearing published? (I) (C)**

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website. For the positive score to be awarded, the report needs to contain the data on the submitted proposals and rationales for their adoption/rejection. The report or news per se does not imply a positive score.

- 13. The LSG invited citizens to the latest organized public debate on the public policy documents in at least three of the following five ways: by publishing a call on the LSG website, media statement, via local communities, on social media, by distributing leaflets/directly informing the citizens. (I)**

This indicator is determined by examining the website, LSG social media accounts and by forwarding a request for access to information. To be positively scored, it is sufficient that they have used three of any listed channels (for social media, at least one channel or social network is sufficient). The data is to be collected about all mechanisms.

Regulations

- 14. Was in the past three years at least one public debate organized in line with the good practice standards for drafting new regulations or significantly amending the existing ones? (C)**

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports of public hearings, news on the delivered public hearing) or based on the request for access to information if such information cannot be found on the website. The invitation to public hearing, report or the link to the news on the delivered public hearing is to be provided. The following is required for the positive score: a) a minimum duration of 20 days between the day of publishing and the day of closing; b) at least one public event (in-person or online) was organized; c) a draft act under discussion including the rationale was published.

- 15. Was the report of the public hearing on drafting regulations containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of proposals submitted during the public hearing published? (I)**

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website. To be awarded a positive score, the report needs to contain the data on the submitted proposals and rationales for their adoption/rejection. The report or news per se does not imply a positive score.

- 16. Over the past three years, the LSG didn't adopt a single regulation that requires a public hearing without first organizing a public hearing. (C)**

This indicator is determined by cross-checking the data obtained by examining the website (adopted regulations) and a request – for provision of data on public hearings organized in the past three years, or two requests, if it was not possible to determine which regulations were adopted – for provision of data on regulations (requiring a mandatory public hearing) adopted in the past three years (implementation of the mandatory public hearing procedure during the preparation of the statute, budget in the part of investment planning, strategic development plans, determination of the rate of original revenues, spatial and urban plans, as well as other general acts based on the proposal of a qualified number of citizens or the request of one third of assembly members) and for submitting data on public hearings organized in the past three years. The regulations for which a public hearing is

mandatory are determined by the Law on Local Self-Government. A positive score requires the following: (a) a minimum duration of 20 days between the date of publication and the date of closing; (b) at least one public meeting (in-person or online) was organized; (c) a draft act under discussion including the rationale was published.

17. The LSG published the reports of all public hearings on regulations organized in the past three years containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of proposals submitted during the public hearings. (I)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website. To be awarded a positive score, it is necessary that there are reports from all public hearings and that all reports contain data on submitted proposals and rationales for adoption/rejection.

18. The LSG invited the citizens to the latest organized public debate on regulations in at least three of the following five ways: by publishing a call on the LSG website, media statement, via local communities, on social media, by distributing leaflets/directly informing the citizens. (I) (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the website, LSG social media accounts and by forwarding a request for access to information. To be positively scored, it is sufficient that they have used three of any listed channels (for social media, at least one channel or social network is sufficient).

19. Were citizens/representatives of citizens involved in the work of the LSG bodies drafting regulations and public policies in the past year? (D)

This indicator is determined by examining minutes of the sessions involving citizen representatives.

Participation in the implementation of regulations and addressing needs

20. Does the LSG have a mechanism for online or SMS reporting of communal problems and/or violations of local regulations or regulations for which local inspections are competent? (D)

This indicator is determined by examining the website and forwarding a request if, by examining the website, it was not possible to determine if the SMS mechanism was in place.

21. Does the LSGs mechanism for online or SMS reporting of communal problems and/or violations of local regulations or regulations for which local inspections are responsible contain a description (text or through a drop-down menu) of what problems can be reported?

This indicator is determined by examining the website and forwarding a request if it is not possible to determine whether there is an SMS mechanism by examining the website.

22. Has the LSG responded within the deadline to the complaint/question raised through the mechanism for reporting communal problems and/or violations of local regulations or regulations for which local inspections are competent? (D)

This indicator is determined by testing – asking questions (e.g. – to whom should I report that a speed bump needs to be placed in my street). If there is no mechanism (e.g. 48 hours), the mark is 0.

23. Does the mechanism for reporting violations of local regulations, or regulations that fall under the jurisdiction of local inspections, include information on the timeframe within which the citizen will receive a response? (I)

This indicator is determined by examining the site. This information needs to be available directly with the mechanism (and not, for example, in the labour info booklet).

Budget-related participation

Financial plans of local communities

24. Did the LSG prepare and disseminate an instruction to all local communities about the manner of informing citizens and inviting them to participate in consultations on the drafting of development programmes and financial plans of local communities? (C)

This indicator is determined based on the data obtained in the request forwarded to LSG to provide the instruction.

25. Did the LSG prepare and disseminate an instruction to all local communities about the manner of informing citizens on the results and decisions of consultations on the drafting of development programmes and financial plans of the local communities? (I) (C)

This indicator is determined based on the data obtained by the request forwarded to LSG to provide the instruction.

26. Did the LSG prepare and disseminate an instruction to all local communities about the manner of informing citizens on the method of implementing decisions generated via consultations on the drafting of development programmes and financial plans of the local communities? (I)

This indicator is determined based on the data obtained by the request forwarded to LSG to provide the instruction.

27. Did the LSG receive feedback from the local communities on informing citizens about the implementation of decisions generated via consultations on the drafting of development programmes and financial plans of the local communities? (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the reports/feedback from local communities – if fewer than half of the local communities files this type of report, the score is 0.

Preliminary Consultation Procedure

28. Before the preparation of the draft budget, was a preliminary consultative procedure or public hearing organized (survey or discussion on projects/capital projects, surveying citizens on what they would like the budget to finance) regarding the budget, capital projects and/or other projects whose implementation is planned or could be realized? (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports from public hearings, news on the delivered public hearing) or on the basis of a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. Information about the survey,

a call to consultations or a public hearing, a report or a link to the news about the organized survey or the consultation/public hearing held is requested, provided that the mentioned document or news contains information about the date of the hearing/survey.

29. Was the preliminary consultation procedure (or survey) or public hearing within the framework of the preliminary consultation procedure organized before August 15th? (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports from public hearings, news on the delivered public hearing) or on the basis of a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. The call to public hearing, a report or a link to the news about the public hearing is requested, provided that the document or news contains information about the date of the public hearing/survey.

30. Has the preliminary consultation process lasted at least 20 days? (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports from public hearings, news on the delivered public hearing) or on the basis of a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. A call to public hearing, a report or a link to the news about the public hearing is requested, provided that the document or news contains information about the duration of the public hearing.

31. Was it possible for the citizens to propose projects in the preliminary consultation procedure on the budget, i.e. the projects that will be implemented from the budget? (C) (D)

This indicator implies that it was possible to add a new capital project, and not only those proposed by the LSG for voting. This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports from public hearings, news about the held public hearing – provided that these documents/news contain information that it is possible to add or that a new proposal of citizens has been added to the statement) or on the basis of a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. The sought information is whether it was possible to propose an additional project and where that was published. If the response claims that it was possible, but this was not announced in advance and no new proposals were made, the score is 0.

32. Did the call for a public hearing/notice of the survey include information on the criteria that would be used to evaluate citizens' proposals and decide which projects would be implemented? (I) (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, i.e. on the basis of a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website, and the public hearing has been held and the call for the public hearing has been sent to citizens through other channels.

33. Did the LSG invite indirect budget beneficiaries to conduct open consultations with citizens on how they could plan expenditures for the upcoming year? (C)

This indicator is determined by reviewing the call, which is requested from the LSG. For a positive score, the LSG must provide a document that clearly confirms that a call was issued. It is not necessary to provide proof that the indirect budget beneficiaries organized the consultations.

34. Did the LSG invite direct budget beneficiaries to conduct open consultations with citizens on how they could plan expenditures for the upcoming year? (C)

This indicator is determined by reviewing the call, which is requested from the LSG. For a positive score, the LSG must provide a document that clearly confirms that a call was issued. It is not necessary to provide proof that the direct budget beneficiaries organized the consultations.

35. Has a report been published on the prior consultative process or public hearing, which includes explanations for adopting/rejecting proposals? (I) (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website. For a positive score, the report must contain information on the submitted proposals and rationales for their adoption or rejection. A report or news article per se does not imply a positive score.

General Budget

36. Has a public hearing on the draft budget been organized?? (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports from public hearings, news about the delivered public hearing) or on the basis of a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. It is necessary to provide a document or link on the basis of which it can be established that the discussion has been organized.

37. Did the public hearing on the draft budget cover the entire budget, and not just capital projects? (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports from public hearings, news about the delivered public hearing) or on the basis of a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. It is necessary to provide a document or link on the basis of which it can be established that the discussion has been organized.

38. Was the public hearing on the draft budget organized before November 1st? (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports from public hearings, news about the delivered public hearing) or on the basis of a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. The required information is a call for the public hearing, a report, or a link to news about the delivered public hearing, provided that the document or news contain the date of the public hearing on the draft budget.

39. The LSG invited the citizens to the public hearing on the draft budget in at least three of the following five ways: by publishing a call on the LSG website, media statement, via local communities, on social media, by distributing leaflets/directly informing the citizens. (I) (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the website, LSG social media accounts and by forwarding a request for access to information. To be positively scored, it is sufficient that they have used three of any listed channels (for social media, at least one channel or social network is sufficient).

40. In addition to the draft budget, a rationale of the budget was published along with the call for the public hearing. (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings), i.e. on the basis of a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. It is necessary to submit a document or link on the basis of which it can be determined that the explanation of the budget has been published with the call to public hearing, which contains data on the implementation of the budget and the performance of budget programs for the first six months of the current year, or the link where the rationale and the report can be found.

41. A public hearing on the draft budget was organized by forwarding proposals via email or regular mail and by organising public events. (C)

Both forms have to be organized for this indicator to be positively scored. This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports, news about the public hearing) or based on the request for access to information if such information cannot be found on the website or if it is not possible to determine whether both forms were organized. A document or link verifying that both forms were organized needs to be provided.

42. A minimum period of 20 days was envisaged for submitting proposals via email or regular mail within the public hearing on the draft budget. (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports, news about the public hearing) or based on the request for access to information if such information cannot be found on the website or if it is not possible to determine the deadline envisaged. A document or link enabling determining the deadline needs to be provided.

43. A public event within the public hearing on the draft budget was announced at least 10 days ahead. (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings, calls to public hearings, reports, news about the public hearing) or based on the request for access to information if such information cannot be found on the website or if it is not possible to determine when the public event was announced and when it was delivered. A document or link enabling determining the dates needs to be provided.

44. During the public hearing, at least one proposal was submitted (excluding proposals from assembly members, municipal council members, and budget beneficiaries) for the amendment and/or supplement of the draft budget? (C) (D)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (report from the public hearing), or by request, if it cannot be determined by examining the LSG website.

45. Was the report of the public hearing on the draft budget, containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of each proposal submitted during the public hearing, published? (I) (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website. For the positive score to be awarded, the report needs to contain the data on the submitted proposals and rationales for their adoption/rejection. The report or news per se does not imply a positive score.

46. At least 1/1000 of the total population participated in the public hearing on the draft budget (submitted proposals by e-mail or classic mail, attendance at public meetings). (C) (D)

For the score to be awarded, the population data (Internet, LSG website or the website of the Statistical Office) and the number of participants in the public hearing need to be provided. The number of public hearing participants can be determined by examining the LSG website (public hearings' reports) or based on the request for access to information if such information cannot be found on the website. The participants' number or documents (minutes, information about the number of proposals received by email or regular mail) need to be provided allowing to determine the number of participants.

Small projects

47. Did the LSG organize public consultations on launching calls for the allocation of funds to natural or legal persons (e.g. energy efficiency for individuals, media, agriculture, sports associations, religious communities, CSOs)? (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (call for consultations, news about held consultations), or based on a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. An invitation to a consultation, a report or a link to the news of the consultations is requested.

48. Has the LSG organized public consultations on announcing calls for informal groups of citizens for the implementation of small projects, which are implemented with the participation of citizens? (C)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (invitation to consultations, news of held consultations), or based on a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. An invitation to a consultation, a report or a link to the news of the consultations is requested.

49. Are there any criteria for scoring/ranking projects submitted to the competition for the allocation of funds for natural or legal persons, i.e. to the competition for the implementation of small projects that are implemented with the participation of citizens? (C) (D)

This indicator is determined based on a review of announced calls for proposals or through a request for access to information – the criteria are being sought.

50. Are the citizens consulted during the process of preparing the criteria? (C) (D)

This indicator is determined on the basis of a request for access to information – an invitation to citizens/associations and minutes of the meeting of the body/group that prescribed the criteria are requested.

51. Has the LSG announced a competition/call for informal groups of citizens for the implementation of small projects, which are implemented with the participation of citizens? (D)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (vacancies, invitations, advertisements, etc.), or on the basis of a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. The content of the call and information on where it was published are required. For a positive score, it must be clearly established that the call was visible/accessible to citizens.

52. Was the call/invitation for informal citizen groups to implement small projects involving citizen participation announced before April 1st of the current year? (D)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (calls, public calls, advertisements, etc.) or based on the request for access to information if such information cannot be found on the website. The call to apply to the competition or the link to the news on call needs to be supplied, provided that such a document or news contains information about the announcement date.

53. Does the value of the funds envisaged under the call for small projects implemented via citizen participation exceed 3% of the collected property tax? (D)

Information about the amount of the collected property tax in the past year (from the LSG website or by forwarding a request if such data is not available) and information about the value of funds envisaged under the call needs to be provided. The score is 0, if any of this data cannot be obtained.

54. Does the call/invitation for informal groups of citizens for the implementation of small projects include criteria that encourage the implementation of projects intended for underdeveloped rural communities? (D)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public calls, competitions, invitations, etc.), or based on a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. A call for applications or a link to news about the call is required, provided that the document or news contain the criteria.

55. Does the competition/call for informal groups of citizens for the implementation of small projects have criteria that encourage the implementation of projects intended for gender equality and empowerment of vulnerable groups? (D)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website (public calls, competitions, invitations, etc.), or. on the basis of a request for access to information if the information cannot be found on the website. A call for applications or a link to a news article about the call is required, provided that the document contains the criteria.

56. Is there an act that regulates the announcement of calls/invitations for informal groups of citizens for the implementation of small projects that are implemented with the participation of citizens? (C) (D)

This indicator is determined based on a request for access to information – the act is requested. A positive score is given even if the act exists but the call was not announced.

57. The LSG have sent an invitation to participate in the competition for the implementation of small projects that are implemented with the participation of citizens in at least three of the following five ways: by publishing the invitation on the LSGs website, press release, through local communities, through social media, leaflets/directly informing citizens. (I) (D)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website, profiles of local self-government units on social networks and requesting access to information. For a positive point, it is sufficient that any three of the above channels have been used (for social media, it is enough that at least one channel or social network has been used).

58. Has a report been published on the results of the call for implementation of small projects involving citizen participation, which contains information on the review of all submitted proposals? (I)

This indicator is determined by examining the LSG website. For a positive score, the report must contain data on all submitted projects, information on which were selected, and how they were selected (scoring, criteria).

Annex 2. Average result by indicators

Indicator issues	% of LIPA max score 2024/2025	% of the max result. LIPA 2022/2023
2. In the past three years, the LSG did not violate regulations regarding the actions in connection with the referendum and people's initiative.	100.0%	93.2%
7. Was in the previous three years at least one public hearing delivered in line with the regulations defining the drafting of public policy documents during the preparation of the public policy documents (strategies, action plans)?	93.2%	77.3%
11. Was a public hearing organized when the latest Sustainable Development Strategy was adopted?	93.2%	56.8%
36. Has a public hearing on the draft budget been organized?	90.9%	84.1%
41. A public hearing on the draft budget was organized by forwarding proposals via email or regular mail and by organising public events.	86.4%	New indicator
6. Is the existence of a 'citizen' chair in the City/Municipal Assembly foreseen by the rules of procedure or another act (agreement, memorandum of cooperation)?	84.1%	95.5%
14. Was in the past three years at least one public debate organized in line with the good practice standards for drafting new regulations or significantly amending the existing ones?	84.1%	63.6%
37. Did the public hearing on the draft budget cover the entire budget, not just capital projects?	84.1%	New indicator
8. Was the report of the public hearing on the public policy documents' drafting published, containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of proposals submitted during the public hearing?	68.2%	45.5%
49. Are there any criteria for scoring/ranking projects submitted to the competition for the allocation of funds for natural or legal persons, i.e. to the competition for the implementation of small projects that are implemented with the participation of citizens?	68.2%	New indicator
9. The LSG did not adopt a single public policy in the past three years without organising a public hearing beforehand.	65.9%	63.6%
16. Over the past three years, the LSG didn't adopt a single regulation that requires a public hearing without first organizing a public hearing.	65.9%	59.1%

40. In addition to the draft budget, a rationale of the budget was published along with the call for the public hearing.	65.9% ⁴	4.5%
43. A public event within the public hearing on the draft budget was announced at least 10 days ahead.	56.8%	72.7%
45. Was the report of the public hearing on the draft budget, containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of each proposal submitted during the public hearing, published?	54.5%	45.5%
12. Was the report of the public hearing on the sustainable development strategy containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of proposals submitted during the public hearing published?	52.3%	20.5%
13. The LSG invited citizens to the latest organized public debate on the public policy documents in at least three of the following five ways: by publishing a call on the LSG website, media statement, via local communities, on social media, by distributing leaflets/directly informing the citizens.	47.7%	31.8%
18. The LSG invited the citizens to the latest organized public debate on regulations in at least three of the following five ways: by publishing a call on the LSG website, media statement, via local communities, on social media, by distributing leaflets/directly informing the citizens.	47.7%	34.1%
15. Was the report of the public hearing on drafting regulations, containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of proposals submitted during the public hearing, published?	45.5%	34.1%
20. Does the LSG have a mechanism for online or SMS reporting of communal problems and/or violations of local regulations or regulations for which local inspections are competent?	43.2% ⁵	42.1%
44. During the public hearing, at least one proposal was submitted (excluding proposals from assembly members, municipal council members, and budget beneficiaries) for the amendment and/or supplement of the draft budget?	43.2%	New indicator
5. Have the elected representatives of the citizens been appointed to working bodies (councils, commissions) of the City/Municipal Assembly, and have they participated in the work of these bodies?	36.4%	81,8%
10. The LSG published the reports of all public hearings on public policies organized in the past three years containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of proposals submitted during the public hearings.	36.4%	27.3%
39. The LSG invited the citizens to the public hearing on the draft budget in at least three of the following five ways: by publishing a call on the LSG website, media statement, via local communities, on social media, by distributing leaflets/directly informing the citizens.	31.8%	40.9%

⁴ The indicator had an additional condition: the explanatory memorandum of the budget contains data on the implementation and performance of budget programs for the first six months

⁵ Combination of two indicators from LIPA 2022/23

51. Has the LSG announced a competition/call for informal groups of citizens for the implementation of small projects, which are implemented with the participation of citizens?	31.8%	6.8%
21. Does the LSGs mechanism for online or SMS reporting of communal problems and/or violations of local regulations or regulations for which local inspections are responsible contain a description (text or through a drop-down menu) of what problems can be reported?	27.3%	New indicator
28. Before the preparation of the draft budget, was a preliminary consultative procedure or public hearing organized (survey or discussion on projects/capital projects, surveying citizens on what they would like the budget to finance) regarding the budget, capital projects and/or other projects whose implementation is planned or could be realized?	27.3%	34.1% ⁶
31. Was it possible for the citizens to propose projects in the preliminary consultation procedure on the budget, i.e. the projects that will be implemented from the budget?	25.0%	27.3%
48. Has the LSG organized public consultations on announcing calls for informal groups of citizens for the implementation of small projects, which are implemented with the participation of citizens?	25.0%	2.3%
55. Does the competition/call for informal groups of citizens for the implementation of small projects have criteria that encourage the implementation of projects intended for gender equality and empowerment of vulnerable groups?	25.0% ⁷	2.3%
19. Were citizens/representatives of citizens involved in the work of the LSG bodies drafting regulations and public policies in the past year?	22.7%	34.1%
46. At least 1/1000 of the total population participated in the public hearing on the draft budget (submitted proposals by e-mail or classic mail, attendance at public meetings).	22.7%	22.7%
56. Is there an act that regulates the announcement of calls/invitations for informal groups of citizens for the implementation of small projects that are implemented with the participation of citizens?	22.7%	4.5%
17. The LSG published the reports of all public hearings on regulations organized in the past three years containing rationales for the adoption/rejection of proposals submitted during the public hearings.	20.5%	22.7%
38. Was the public hearing on the draft budget organized before November 1st?	20.5%	31.8%
42. A minimum period of 20 days was envisaged for forwarding proposals via email or regular mail within the public hearing on the draft budget.	20.5%	15.9%

⁶ The question was only about capital projects

⁷ At least 30% for gender equality and the empowerment of vulnerable groups.

58. Has a report been published on the results of the call for implementation of small projects involving citizen participation, which contains information on the review of all submitted proposals?	20.5%	4.5%
30. Has the preliminary consultation process lasted at least 20 days?	15.9%	15.9%
50. Are the citizens consulted during the process of preparing the criteria?	15.9%	2.3%
23. Does the mechanism for reporting violations of local regulations, or regulations that fall under the jurisdiction of local inspections, include information on the timeframe within which the citizen will receive a response?	13.6%	11.4%
47. Did the LSG organize public consultations on launching calls for the allocation of funds to natural or legal persons (e.g. energy efficiency for individuals, media, agriculture, sports associations, religious communities, CSOs)?	13.6%	New indicator
54. Does the call/invitation for informal groups of citizens for the implementation of small projects include criteria that encourage the implementation of projects intended for underdeveloped rural communities?	13.6% ⁸	2.3%
29. Was the preliminary consultation procedure (or survey) or public hearing within the framework of the preliminary consultation procedure organized before August 15th?	11.4%	9.1% ⁹
35. Has a report been published on the prior consultative process or public hearing, which includes explanations for adopting/rejecting proposals?	11.4%	9.1%
53. Does the value of the funds envisaged under the call for small projects implemented via citizen participation exceed 3% of the collected property tax?	11.4%	2.3%
57. The LSG have sent an invitation to participate in the competition for the implementation of small projects that are implemented with the participation of citizens in at least three of the following five ways: by publishing the invitation on the LSGs website, press release, through local communities, through social media, leaflets/directly informing citizens.	11.4%	4.5%
4. Was the inclusion of vulnerable groups in public hearings and other forms of citizen participation implemented last year?	9.1%	6.8%
1. In the past three years, the LSG acted upon a people's initiative and/or announced a referendum	6.8%	4.5%

⁸ A different formulation: at least 50% for underdeveloped rural communities

⁹ Previous: Before September 1st, 2010

3. Does any LSG act particularly envisage the inclusion of vulnerable groups in public hearings and other forms of citizen participation?	6.8%	9.1%
22. Has the LSG responded within the deadline to the complaint/question raised through the mechanism for reporting communal problems and/or violations of local regulations or regulations for which local inspections are competent?	6.8%	18.2%
34. Did the LSG invite direct budget beneficiaries to conduct open consultations with citizens on how they could plan expenditures for the upcoming year?	4.5%	0.0% ¹⁰
24. Did the LSG prepare and disseminate an instruction to all local communities about the manner of informing citizens and inviting them to participate in consultations on the drafting of development programmes and financial plans of local communities?	2.3%	4.5%
27. Did the LSG receive feedback from the local communities on informing citizens about the implementation of decisions generated via consultations on the drafting of development programmes and financial plans of the local communities?	2.3%	0.0%
33. Did the LSG invite indirect budget beneficiaries to conduct open consultations with citizens on how they could plan expenditures for the upcoming year?	2.3%	0.0% ¹¹
25. Did the LSG prepare and disseminate an instruction to all local communities about the manner of informing citizens on the results and decisions of consultations on the drafting of development programmes and financial plans of the local communities?	0.0%	0.0%
26. Did the LSG prepare and disseminate an instruction to all local communities about the manner of informing citizens on the method of implementing decisions generated via consultations on the drafting of development programmes and financial plans of the local communities?	0.0%	0.0%
32. Did the call for a public hearing/notice of the survey include information on the criteria that would be used to evaluate citizens' proposals and decide which projects would be implemented?	0.0%	9,1%
52. Was the call/invitation for informal citizen groups to implement small projects involving citizen participation announced before April 1st of the current year?	0.0%	2.3%

¹⁰ Previous: Did direct budget beneficiaries conduct consultations with citizens on how they could plan expenditures before drafting the budget?

¹¹ Previous: Did indirect budget beneficiaries conduct consultations with citizens on how they could plan expenditures?