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SUMMARY

OF BEST AND WORST LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN MOLDOVA

10

July 2018

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OF BEST AND WORST **10** LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN MOLDOVA

Purpose of evaluation:

May – July 2018



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This summary was developed within the project "Promoting transparency and financial sustainability of regional policies, state-owned enterprises and local authorities in Moldova". The initiative is being implemented by the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) "Viitorul", in partnership with the Institute for Economic and Social Reforms in Slovakia (INEKO), with the financial support of the Official Development Assistance of the Slovak Republic (SlovakAid). The initiative aims to increase the transparency, financial accountability and quality of regional policies, state-owned enterprises and local authorities in Moldova.

This summary represents the third edition of the series of evaluations of development policies at the local and regional level. The first edition was launched in February 2018, including 13 policies – [Summary of best and worst 13 local and regional measures in Moldova](#) (November 2017 – January 2018), while the second edition covered 11 local and regional policies and was presented in May this year - [Summary of best and worst 11 local and regional measures in Moldova](#) (February – April 2018).

The assessment of local and regional policies in the Republic of Moldova follows the description of sustainable, time-lasting practices that can be transferred to other communities, resulting in a final improvement in the quality of local and regional

development policies. Thus, 10 local and regional policies are described in this publication; there are eight value-added policies that can be unique, innovative and with significant impact for the economic and social development of the Republic of Moldova, but also two measures that can cause damage and which should not be an example for the authorities that want to be modern and transparent.

The policies included in the summary were identified, analyzed and appreciated with the support of a Board of Independent Evaluators selected by the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) "Viitorul" on the basis of their administrative and research experience and who perform their activity in regional public authorities, development agencies, business, think tanks, mass - media and academics.

Thus, the evaluators were invited to assess a series of social and economic local decisions and policies (regulations, privatization decisions, strategy papers, public policy concepts) proposed or adopted by local authorities in their field of attributions recognized by the law.

The purpose of the assessment is to describe durable, time-lasting practices that can be transferred to other communities, ultimately improving the quality of local and regional development policies.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology has been prepared by IDIS “Viitorul” and INEKO, with the financial support of the SlovakAid.

Thus, experts of the Evaluation Board have analyzed 10 policies for local economic and social development based on two criteria: (1) quality - their acceptability and (2) their importance to society and local actors. The measurement included the estimation of the effects of these policies and local decisions on the sustainable development and well-being of the communities in which they occurred, the multiplier effects.

The measure of quality measurement included variable values from full disapproval to neutral assessment (0) to full approval [-3; +3]. Experts also assessed the impact of the measure on society and the economy, using a percentage scale [0%; 100%], noting with this indicator the degree of relevance of measurement for the local community and society as a whole.

The final scores were calculated on the basis of the average value obtained from the quality of the measure (policy) multiplied by the coefficient expressing the average value of the measure significance for the local society and the economy. The final score of the assessed measures will range from [-300; 300]. According to the methodology used, all measures can be represented on a map of relative intensities, thus indicating the contribution of experts to evaluate these measures on social and economic development.

RANKING OF BEST AND WORST MEASURES

Municipality	Quality [-3; +3]	Relevance [0%; 100%]	Final score [-300; 300]	Ranks
Soroca Rayon <i>Travel guide of Soroca rayon</i>	2.6	85.0	218.5	I
Colibași, Cahul rayon <i>Inter municipal service of volunteer firemen at Colibași, Vadul lui Isac and Brînza</i>	2.4	87.7	209.5	II
Căușeni <i>Preparing the Economic Development Plan of Căușeni 2019 - 2020</i>	2.4	87.3	207.0	III
Ungheni <i>Collected electrical waste - Protected human life</i>	2.5	82.0	203.4	IV
Orhei <i>The unique electronic system for processing requests and petitions of the inhabitants of Orhei municipality: e-Primaria</i>	2.1	79.7	166.5	V
Budești, Chișinău municipality <i>Transparency and active involvement of the citizens in the local government act in the village of Budești, Chișinău municipality</i>	2.0	77.3	154.7	VI
Strășeni <i>Ensuring budgetary transparency in Strășeni municipality</i>	1.8	73.4	135.1	VII
Varnița, Anenii Noi rayon <i>Publication of public procurement contracts by Varnița Village Hall</i>	1.7	73.0	124.8	VIII
Telenești Rayon <i>Companies of the head of the Telenesti department of constructions, favorite in the contests organized in the rayon</i>	-2.4	83.0	-199.2	IX
Trușeni, Chișinău municipality <i>Corrupt involvement of the local elected representatives in the commune of Trușeni in the alienation of the public lands</i>	-2.3	87.7	-204.3	X

MEMBERS OF THE EVALUATION BOARD

1. **Aurelia Țepordei**, Director of the Professional Development Department, Academy of Public Administration
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13. **Vasile Cioaric**, Program Director, Contact Center
14. **Veaceslav Aftene**, journalist, portal www.ialovnews.md
15. **Victoria Cujba**, Head of the Public Administration Department, State Chancellery

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 10 best and worst local and regional development policies in Moldova implemented in May - July 2018 were identified and evaluated by members of an Evaluation Board at the IDIS “Viitorul” and INEKO invitation. The activity aims to describe sustainable, time-lasting policies that can be transferred to other communities, ultimately improving the quality of local and regional development policies.

Public policies were measured on the basis of two methodologically approved criteria, taking into account their importance for the community and their sustainability. Thus, the members of the Evaluation Board assessed and ranked the policies analyzed by (a) quality, a criterion that range between -3 and 3 and (b) the relevance of this policy for the community and economy, ie the impact it produces, using a scale percent from 0 to 100%. The multiplication of this two criteria represents the final score for each policy, which ranges between -300 and 300 points.

According to the analysis, the best five local public policies in our country refer to the Tourist Guide of the Soroca rayon - with a final score of 218.5 points, the inter-municipal service of volunteer firefighters at Colibași, Vadul lui Isac and Brînza - 209.5 points, the elaboration of the Economic Development Plan of Căușeni - 207 points, the collection of electric waste from Ungheni municipality, with a final score of 203, as well as the system for processing the petitions of the inhabitants of Orhei: e-Primaria, which has accumulated a final score of 166.5 points.

The tourist guide of the Soroca rayon, launched on May 28, contains the most useful information about the tourist attractions of the region. The publication divides the rayon into five microzones and presents the protected areas of historical and cultural heritage, museums, photographs, information about popular craftsmen, contact details of accommodation units, etc. Although the members of the Evaluation Board believe that such a policy

will have a positive impact only if it is linked to the development of infrastructure and public services.

And 11,000 inhabitants of the villages of Brînza, Vadul Isac and Colibași in Cahul District will be safe in case of fires and calamities thanks to an inter-municipal service of volunteer firefighters. The service was launched on July 16 this year and has 25 uniforms and a fire truck donated from an Austrian organization. But by the end of the year, the fire station will be built from the contribution from the natives. The members of the Evaluation Board consider that the cost-effectiveness of maintaining a local fire service should be taken into account.

Another innovative practice included in the ranking is found in the municipality of Ungheni, the western capital of the Republic of Moldova. The campaign “Collected Electrical Waste - Protected Human Life”, conducted between April 20 and May 20, 2018, is a great activity of informing citizens about the importance of the selective collection of electrical and electronic waste. Pupils and children from kindergartens also participated in the competition for waste electrical waste. And the institutions that collected the largest amount of electrical and electronic waste were awarded with a few holiday days in the twin towns of Ungheni.

Also, the members of the Evaluation Board also assessed two negative policies that show certain violations of the principles of transparency. These are two cases that have been made public in Moldovan media sources lately. It is about the corrupt involvement of the local elected representatives in the commune of Trușeni in the alienation of the public lands and the favoritism of the companies headed by the head of the construction section of Telenesti rayon to the public procurement contests.

The fourth edition of the Summary of best and worst local and regional development measures is due to be launched in October this year.

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURES THAT RECEIVED A POSITIVE ASSESSMENT

I

Title: TRAVEL GUIDE OF SOROCA RAYON

Information source: **Soroca Rayon Council**

The measure pursued by the local authority:

Regional policies for the development of tourist potential

CONTEXT

250 tourist attractions in the Soroca region are included in the Tourist/Travel Guide of the Soroca rayon, published in the UNDP project “Integration of biodiversity conservation issues in national territorial planning processes and land use practices”. The project aims to support biodiversity conservation activities in land-use planning policies and land use practices in the Republic of Moldova.

ACTIVITIES

The *Travel Guide of the Soroca rayon* contains the most useful information about the tourist attractions and protected natural areas, museum data, popular craftsmen and accommodation units. The publication divides the rayon into five microzones and presents the protected areas of local, national and international interest in the Soroca rayon, the monuments of nature, historical and cultural heritage, museums, photographs, information about popular craftsmen, contact details of accommodation units, etc. “*We were talking with the representatives of the Rayon Council about how to make this guide interesting, and then it came up with an idea that was hard to achieve, let’s write absolutely about every municipality. It is easy and understandable, but at the same time complicated*”, says the Coordinator of the guide, Viorel Miron.

Within the project information billboards on the nature, fauna and local vegetation were also developed. Informational items were disseminated to municipalities, museums, public libraries and school from the Soroca rayon.

According to the Travel Guide, in Soroca rayon are about 413 historical, art, architecture and natural monuments, worth to be valued and visited by tourists. Thus, there are five eco-tourism micro-zones, a site protected by the Ramsar Convention, “Unguri-Holoşniţa”, three special landscapes (Cosauţi, Rudi-Arioneşti and Holoşniţa), but also an interesting forest reserve in Băxani. At the same time, the region is rich in a lot of natural monuments. But the Pearl of the Dniester is undoubtedly the medieval fortress of Soroca, which lures tourists in northern Moldavia.

The publication, which has 150 pages, was launched on May 28, 2018, within the Soroca Citadel, at a public cultural event. At the launching of the guide was also opened the photo exhibition entitled “Village as a tourist destination”, 5th edition. The purpose of the vernissage was to highlight the pictures of the most attractive places, traditions and the authentic way of life in villages from Soroca.

IMPACT

The Travel Guide of the Soroca rayon is an important means of long-term tourism promotion. The publication, which gathers all the attractions of the region, is a top-notch card for every visitor to the rayon. In this context, vice-president of Soroca rayon, Vladimir Nicuța, considers “*I am sure this guide will help us to be better known. Let us raise the interest to have as many visitors here in Soroca, in our villages. Thus, this is one of our development resources what we call tourism*”.

COMMENTS

The development potential of the tourist potential in the Soroca rayon is as important as it is needed by local authorities because it contributes directly to economic development and higher incomes to local budgets. The tourist guide of the Soroca rayon will contribute to the promotion of the national community and traditions abroad, attracting foreign tourists, capitalizing on the tourism potential and economic development of the district. Of course, according to members of the Evaluation Board, such a policy can have a positive impact if it is linked to the development of infrastructure or the quality of public services. Similarly, the impact would be bigger and more real if the Travel Guide would have translated into more internationally-traded languages and promoted more actively.

Scores: **QUALITY** [+2.6] **RELEVANCE** [85.0%]

Information source: **The public group on Facebook of the project “Migration and Local Development”**

The measure pursued by local public authorities:

Policies to modernize public services through community involvement

CONTEXT

11,000 inhabitants of Cahul rayon will have security, more qualitative and operative services in case of fires and calamities. These are the inhabitants of the villages of Brînza, Vadul lui Isac and Colibași who join forces with local authorities and natives to create for the first time an inter-municipal service of volunteer firefighters. The Inter-Community Voluntary Fire Service (SIPV) project - a new inter-community cooperation model, was launched on July 16th at a public event. The Cahul project is due to be executed by the end of this year under the United Nations Development Program's Local Migration and Development Program (MiDl), in partnership with the Swiss Government.

ACTIVITIES

The villages of Brînza, Vadul lui Isac and Colibași are located in the middle of the national road Cahul-Giurgiulești, and in the event of the outbreak of fires, Cahul firefighting crews can intervene only after 30 minutes from the call. Thus, in order to increase the fire safety, the service will be located at Colibași, where a local fire brigade with a surface of 80 square meters will be built, equipped with the necessary equipment for interventions. The post will work with the support of volunteers from the three localities who, in case of fire, are ready to intervene in risk situations.

The service already has 25 uniforms and a fire engine that was received on 27 June by an Austrian organization. On 28-29 June 2018 by volunteer firemen from Austria, Peter Kiechle and Florian Kiechle, 30 volunteers from the villages of Colibași, Brînza and Vadul lui Isac were trained. Thus, participants had the opportunity to simulate the extinction of a fire, as well as providing first aid and evacuating the victims. Currently, the Colibași Migrants Association (ABC) urges citizens to donate for this noble cause. Donations can be made to the Colibași Village Hall and to the platform <https://guvern24.md>. From all allocated financial sources, the fire station in Colibași will be built.

The total budget of the project, which represents a new model of inter-community cooperation, is \$ 80,055. The government of Switzerland has covered over 60 percent (50 thousand dollars), and the three local governments

have allocated nearly \$ 28,000. But for the project to be successfully implemented, and the inhabitants of Cherenza, Vadul Isac and Colibași feel safer, it is necessary to contribute to the amount of 1 830 dollars (1 570 euro). Thus, the migrant's allowance will be collected through crowdfunding, and a public association will provide support over 300 dollars.

IMPACT

By creating the inter-community service of volunteer firefighters in the village of Colibași there will be reduced the response time to the intervention of the liquidation of the risk situations, the nearest fire-fighting unit being the Cahul Exceptional Situation Department, which is 20 kilometers from the Colibași.

COMMENTS

The inter-municipal service of volunteer firefighters is a model of inter-community cooperation and civic mobilization worthy of being followed and can contribute to solving many community problems through involvement, participation and co-operation. The project aims to capitalize on and support volunteer activities as an expression of civic involvement, solidarity and responsibility and their professional value, materialized in the support of the three communities during emergency situations, but also to their prevention. On the one hand, the initiative, inspired by Austrian experience, is effective and creates synergy between the MiDL project, local authorities and community residents that are motivated to become involved in the decision-making process. On the other hand, the members of the Evaluation Board retain their hold on the contribution of the natives to the sustainability of this policy. And taking into consideration that the establishment and maintenance of a fire service, even local, requires financial resources, prepared persons and modern equipment, the cost-effectiveness ratio has to be taken into account.

Scores: **QUALITY** [+2.4] **RELEVANCE** [87.7%]

Information source: **Căușeni Town Hall**

The measure pursued by the local authority:

Local policies for sustainable economic development

CONTEXT

On September 1, 2017, the Căușeni Town Hall became a member of the project “Mayors for Economic Growth” (M4EG), together than other 22 local public authorities in Moldova. The project is a new initiative of the European Union launched in January 2017 within the Eastern Partnership Flagship Initiative on Sustainable Municipal Development. Under the terms of the membership, the local authority has committed itself to cooperating with the business community and civil society to accelerate local economic growth and job creation by strengthening efforts in the following five priority areas: the regulatory and institutional framework, skills and human capital development, land and infrastructure, access to finance and external positioning and marketing.

In this respect, the Local Economic Development Plan 2019-2020 of Căușeni will constitute the framework for the integrated and sustainable development of the town and the quality of life of the inhabitants will improve during its implementation.

ACTIVITIES

The first phase of the “Mayors for Economic Growth” project is the local authorities’ elaboration of local economic development plans that are strongly focused on local potential and the involvement of the private sector. For this purpose, a working group was created in February 2018 for the elaboration of the Local Economic Development Plan 2019-2020, including civil servants, specialists from Căușeni Town Hall, representatives of the business community and civil society. At the same time, the projects and investments specialist from Căușeni mayoralty participated in a series of trainings for the development of local economic development plans between November 2017 and May 2018.

As a result of the training and activities within the working group, in the spring of this year the main directions of the Development Plan were established, but also its vision, which is the following - “ Căușeni represents a prosperous community, developed economically with a quality of life standard and a dynamic entrepreneurial culture and well-developed tourism”. The objectives of the Economic Development Plan include the following priorities:

1. Strengthen local actors for entrepreneurship development in Căușeni.
2. Creating jobs and increasing the quality of life of the inhabitants of Căușeni.
3. Development of tourism and related infrastructure.

Among the activities planned to increase the town's economic potential include the opening of a StartUp Center, the creation of a co-working hub for developing business ideas, the development of a tourist guide of the municipality and the modernization of the tourism infrastructure in Căușeni. The town's economic development plan is to be analyzed by experts from the World Bank and the European Commission in autumn this year.

FINANCING

European Union. The “Mayors for Economic Growth” is a regional initiative of the European Union for the years 2017-2020, aiming to support the local public authorities of the Eastern Partnership states (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine).

BENEFICIARIES

The inhabitants of Căușeni, 15,939 citizens (according to the National Bureau of Statistics - NBS data).

IMPACT

The Local Economic Development Plan of Căușeni City will be made public on the Town Hall website - <http://primaria.causeni.org/> and on the website www.m4eg.eu. Therefore, any citizen or donor will be able to access and analyze the main economic policy document of the town. The town's main objectives within the “Mayors for Economic Growth” initiative are to create a dynamic and friendly entrepreneurial culture, to develop the economic sector and increase the standard of citizenship's quality of life. Achieving all these objectives of the European initiative will transform the city of Causeni into a modern urban location worthy of its citizens.

COMMENTS

Any administrative-territorial unit must have a Local Economic Development Plan, so the initiative is necessary and, at the same time, important for the long-term regional economic development of a community. It is to be appreciated that the Plan was developed following best practices of consultation and co-creation, all local actors, including representatives of the local authority, the business community and civil society, were involved in the process of elaboration. The elaboration and approval of the Căușeni's Economic Development Plan results from integrated sustainable development policy at the local and regional level and will contribute substantially to the integrated and sustainable development of the municipality. The policy is a good way to take steps forward, and the process is the best and the right thing to do. On the one hand, the sustainable economic development policy of Căușeni will contribute to the economic development of the town and will increase the confidence of the economic agents in the local administration. On the other hand, at the drafting stage, it is premature to talk about a tangible and/or significant impact of the urban policy. Similarly, the members of the Evaluation Board did not notice to mention the impact or the benefits for citizens. This should be exemplified by figures, for example, the number of new jobs to be created or local businesses that would facilitate understanding of the benefits of each citizen of Căușeni.

Scores: **QUALITY [+2.4]** **RELEVANCE [87.3%]**

Information source: **Ungheni Town Hall**

The measure pursued by the local authority:

Municipal policies for efficient management of electrical and electronic waste

CONTEXT

In 2017, Ungheni made the first steps in collecting electric and electronic waste, and is the first municipality in the Republic of Moldova to implement a pilot project aimed at the selective collection of waste electrical equipment. Thus, from 20 April to 20 May 2018, the Municipal Hall of Ungheni carried out the campaign “Collected Electric Waste - Protected Human Life” to ensure the sustainability of the project “Selective collection of electrical and electronic waste Equipment in Ungheni”, financed by the Official Development Assistance of the Slovak Republic (SlovakAid).

ACTIVITIES

The Campaign “Collected electrical waste - Protected human Life” is an activity of informing the citizens of Ungheni about the importance of the selective collection of electrical/electronic waste (WEEE). During this campaign, citizens were informed about how to collect WEEE. Among the first actions was informing and educating the young generation to ensure responsible civic behavior. Thus, meetings with the kindergartens, high schools and colleges in Ungheni were organized. At the campaign launch event, children from the town’s educational institutions (6 kindergartens, 5 high schools, 3 colleges and a primary school) were informed about the electrical waste, the danger to the environment and human health, but also how can we very easily get rid of this waste. Pupils and children from kindergartens were also included in a practical exercise, namely an electric waste collection contest. Institutions that have collected the largest amount of electrical and electronic waste have been awarded. As a result, students from four theoretical high schools spent several days of summer holidays in the twin towns of Ungheni - Komsomolsk (Ukraine), Auce (Latvia) and Joniskis (Lithuania).

Also, in public institutions, large shops, post office, etc., promotional boxes to collect small batteries, mobile phones and used bulbs were installed. Informative materials (bookmarks, calendars, information on the back of the invoice from the municipal enterprise “AVE-Ungheni”, etc.) were distributed in large numbers to the citizens. The collection and transport of WEEE is ensured by the specialized municipal enterprise “AVE - Ungheni”. The municipal enterprise takes over the calls from the citizens and then collects and stores the WEEE at the collection point. It is equipped with containers for storage of small electrical and electronic waste (bulbs, accumulators, used batteries, telephones, electric boilers, etc.) and containers for large waste disposal (monitors, TVs, refrigerators, washing machines, etc.). All of this waste is to be delivered to specialized recyclers from abroad.

Recently, Ungheni Town Hall, in partnership with “AVE - Ungheni”, launched a new campaign to collect electrical and electronic equipment in Ungheni - “Recycle and win!”. The slogan of this campaign is “Sell WEEE at collection points - get a gift”. Citizens have the opportunity to participate, for the first time, in a raffle with prizes running from 28 June to 28 August 2018.

THE BENEFICIARIES

All citizens of Ungheni, 38,804 people (according to the data provided by the Town Hall).

IMPACT

The campaign launched by Ungheni Town Hall aimed not only at informing, but also raising the awareness of the town’s citizens about the importance of the selective collection of electrical and electronic equipment waste. It is important for citizens to be aware of this problem and to support the public administration’s efforts in the selective collection of electrical waste. Also informing and educating the young generation constituting an indispensable pillar in ensuring responsible civic behavior. The campaign “Collected Electrical Waste - Protected Human Life” is also a unique experience that will allow the Town Hall of Ungheni to access new funds and implement projects aimed at protecting the environment.

COMMENTS

Effective management of waste electrical and electronic waste management in Ungheni is an important policy for the community, especially in addressing environmental and health issues. This action provides a long-term impact on the responsible civic behavior of the community. Politics seems to be a new and innovative one in the Republic of Moldova, which deserves to be replicated in other cities as well. Such initiatives have been successful in Romania and Estonia, for example. It is worth noting that this campaign has continuity by launching another campaign to raise awareness of the importance of collecting electrical waste.

However, the impact of this efficient waste management policy is still unclear, and in what policy opportunities, local waste collection policies of all kinds should be also taken into account.

Scores: **QUALITY** [+2.5] **RELEVANCE** [82.0%]

Title: THE UNIQUE ELECTRONIC SYSTEM FOR PROCESSING REQUESTS AND PETITIONS OF THE INHABITANTS OF ORHEI MUNICIPALITY: E-PRIMARIA

Information source: **Orhei Town Hall**

The measure pursued by the local authority:

Municipal policies for the involvement of civil society in the administrative act

CONTEXT

The Orhei Town Hall has launched starting with 14 May, a digitized system for processing the requests and petitions of the inhabitants. The electronic system helps local people to have a more comfortable and transparent relationship with the Town Hall. Thus, all citizens' and economic agents' requests are examined electronically in record time, and inhabitants can find out online at what stage their requests are executed, or the result issued, with a simple click on cancelaria.orhei.md.

ACTIVITIES

Every request, demarche, letter or other document addressed to the Town Hall by the Orhei inhabitants receive a copy for the electronic system and is then forwarded to the examination or execution. After each stage, the system updates the data about the citizen's request. And the citizen can at any time check online at what stage his request is being examined. He can even see the name of the responsible official. Also, at each request, the Town Hall also indicates the due period, during which the request shall be examined, not longer than prescribed by the law. At the same time, the electronic system automatically reminds you in advance of the deadline.

THE BENEFICIARIES

All the inhabitants of Orhei municipality, with 21 065 inhabitants (according to NBS).

IMPACT

The "e-Primaria" project is a first step to bringing local public services closer to people. The project helps Town Hall officials monitor the execution of requests in legal terms and with more stringency. In addition, the program was implemented in order to relieve the townspeople from the queues at the counters and to ensure better transparency from Orhei Town Hall.

COMMENTS

The e-Primaria policy is one that can solve a number of issues, including overcoming the terms of response to citizens' requests/petitions, the time and cost of the applicant's travel, lack of transparency in the examination of citizens' requests and corruption in public authorities. Creating a unique system for processing citizens' petitions and petitions is a very important project for any municipality, with a big, positive impact on the process of knowing the problems faced by citizens. This system will allow you to save time and financial resources in the petition process, increase access to the requested information, and increase transparency. Also, the e-Primaria system will create transparency vis-à-vis the economic operators participating in public auctions and reduce the number of appeals, and as a result, the expected time for all winner selection procedures will be diminished. The e-Primaria is a useful and thoughtful activity that needs to be replicated in other localities in Moldova, including in Chisinau.

But the system reflects only one aspect of transparency and needs to be developed to expand the list of services offered. By accessing the cancelaria.orhei.md, there is a lack of tools for submitting a petition or requests online. At the same time, access is only allowed to those who have filed an application and have their number. If the purpose of this policy is to simplify citizens' access to Town Hall services, then the platform should be accessible to all and provide information on how to submit an application/petition/request, request patterns, contact details of officials in charge of receiving and processing requests, deadlines, etc. Also, third-age citizens, who have, as a rule, the biggest problems in dealing with LPA, are more reserved in using information technologies. An information campaign, promotion of the project would contribute to the more efficient use of the digital system, considers the members of the Evaluation Board.

Scores: **QUALITY** [+2.1] **RELEVANCE** [79.7%]

Title: **TRANSPARENCY AND ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF THE CITIZENS IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT IN THE VILLAGE OF BUDEȘTI, CHIȘINĂU MUNICIPALITY**

Information source: **Budești Village Hall**

The measure pursued by the authority:

Transparency policies in the local decision-making process

CONTEXT

Citizens want to be involved in the decision-making process and be informed about the use of public money to help develop the community. And local public authorities must have a pro-active attitude and support their needs. In order to achieve these objectives, Budești Village Hall uses the official website - <https://budesti.md/>, but also the profiles on the social networks. Thus, on the public authority's official website, residents find all the Village council decisions, mayor's provisions, and information about Village Hall activities, while Facebook's page of the Mayor Nina Costiuc, is an effective communication channel, and residents and stakeholders are subscribers in real time to the news that is happening in the municipality. According to Nina Costiuc, "*all these transparency measures are ultimately aimed at strengthening governance, ensuring free access to public information, improving dialogue with citizens and involving them in administrative decision-making*".

ACTIVITIES

Thus, for the elaboration of the Strategic Social-Economic Development Plan 2018-2023, the local public administration authority in the village of Budești involved all the social actors in the community and invited them to hearings and public consultations. Therefore, from June 6th to June 16th, all citizens and decision-makers presented suggestions and suggestions for the development plan and were announced by the Village Hall's official website. Subsequently, the opinions and proposals received were analyzed and discussed within the specialized commissions of the Local Council, which took place on 25-28 June. Respectively, on June 28, at the public meeting of the village council at the public meeting, the Strategic Social Economic Development Plan for the next five years was approved.

Also, in July started the repair works of the mini-football field after the young people in the village, together with the local councilors and the specialists have established this priority. The invitation to present offers was made public on the website on June 22, 2018. The works are carefully supervised by young athletes and local counselors who are interested in the quality of the repair. At the same time, the inhabitants of Budești village are connected to the decisions that local elected by means of the online broadcasts of the village council sessions. For example, at the meeting on June 28, the budget of the municipality was modified to the part of revenues and expenditures

by 3 mln. lei, approved for the construction of the aqueduct in the village. For example, the publication of village council decisions, as well as online broadcasting of sessions, especially where the local budget is discussed, provides citizens with the opportunity to know and decide where and how public resources are used.

BENEFICIARIES

The inhabitants of the Budești village, Chișinău municipality, in the number of 5 125 persons (according to the Village Hall data).

IMPACT

The participation of the community in the elaboration of the Strategic Social-Economic Development Plan, as well as in the involvement in the decision-making process, will lead to the increase of the spirit of initiative of the people in the community. This method aims at making the community responsible for the decisions taken and for the whole development process of Budești.

COMMENTS

Ensuring transparency of public administration's work and decisions, as well as citizen involvement in decision-making, are essential for good governance and sustainable local development. Currently, the information boards installed at the Village Hall's door no longer represent an effective channel for informing citizens and ensuring transparency in the decision-making process. Modern transparency tools such as web pages, online session sessions, social networks and other applications are the ones that enable decision makers to ensure genuine transparency. On the one hand, the policy of transparency in local decision-making in the village of Budești addresses a plenary spectrum of local public administration (decision-making, public procurement, council meetings, etc.) and demonstrates that people are more inclined to support decisions and the programs in which they participated. And the involvement of citizens from different social categories in the local government process and in the decision-making process increases civic empowerment. On the other hand, the members of the Evaluation Board consider that ensuring transparency is a legal obligation of all local public authorities, and *"transparency must be a component of any policy, not necessarily a separate policy"*.

Scores: **QUALITY [+2.0]** **RELEVANCE [77.3%]**

Information source: **Strășeni Town Hall**

The measure pursued by the local authority:

Municipal policies to ensure budgetary transparency

CONTEXT

Budgetary transparency is how citizens participate and contribute to decision-making on budgeting and how spending is made. As a result, at the execution stage, the Town Hall of Strășeni emphasizes transparency, and all budget execution reports are available on the official website: <http://www.straseni.md>. Similarly, there are mechanisms for consultation and participation of citizens. With these transparency activities, every citizen understands why the local budget is important and is motivated to actively participate in the decision-making process.

ACTIVITIES

Execution of local budgets shall be carried out through the treasury system of the Ministry of Finance, reflecting, in accordance with the budget classification, in separate accounts on a) revenue collection; b) to carry out the expenses within the limits of the approved allowances. As a result, at the end of March, the municipal budget execution report for 2017 was made public on the Town Hall's website - <http://www.straseni.md>. Thus, according to the report, part of the revenues of the municipal budget was executed in the amount of 41,672,458 thousand lei and constituted 102.3% of the approved revenues, and the expenditures - 39,947, 515 thousand lei, or 97.7 percent. The most important sources of income of the public authority in 2017 were the transfers (27 293 108 lei), ie 65% of the municipal income, and the income tax from the salary (3 616, 888 lei), shows the official site of the Town Hall. In terms of expenditures, most of the municipal money was allocated for salaries (13959, 035 thousand lei), capital investments (4 410, 174 thousand lei) and capital repairs.

Also, all decisions of the Municipal Council regarding the approval and rectification of the municipal budget can be found on the official website of the Town Hall.

BENEFICIARIES

All inhabitants of Strășeni municipality, with 22 217 inhabitants (according to the data provided by the mayoralty).

IMPACT

Taking into account the importance of this document for the development of the community in general, but also for every inhabitant of Straseni municipality, the drafting and execution of the budget must be made under conditions of maximum transparency. Transparency of the town's public budget offers residents the opportunity to know exactly what the local income was, but also what public money went on. At the same time, it allows citizens to get involved and contribute directly to formulating proposals for municipal development and capitalizing on public money.

COMMENTS

Budgetary transparency is a key indicator of good governance, the quality of which depends on the economic development and well-being of a society. The studies conducted in this field have shown that the degree of budgetary transparency is inversely proportional to the degree of corruption in the public sector. Respectively, the more public the public budgets and its components, the less corruption is. Every citizen has the right to know how much the Mayor's office allocates for the repair of the roads, for feeding children in pre-school institutions, for salaries or any other public expenses. In this way, citizens know exactly what the local income was, but also what public money was spent. Similarly, civil society can contribute to formulating proposals for municipal development and capitalizing on public money. Publishing data on the training, approval and execution of budgets should be made in a way that is accessible to every citizen. And the efficient and transparent use of public finances should be one of the motto of local public authority activity throughout the mandate. The project is a good one and must be implemented by all local public authorities.

Although the budgetary transparency policy in Strășeni is a good one and deserves to be taken over by all local public authorities, the majority of the members of the Evaluation Board believe that ensuring budgetary transparency is an obligation of the local public authorities according to the legislation of the Republic of Moldova.

Scores: **QUALITY** [+1.8] **RELEVANCE** [73.4%]

Information source: **Varnița Village Hall, Anenii Noi rayon**

The measure pursued by the local authority:

Local policies for transparency of the procurement process

CONTEXT

Transparency is a veritable control tool, a guarantee of efficient and legal use of contracting authorities' financial resources, being an essential condition for integrity and the prevention of corruption in public procurement. In this context, the application of the transparency principle within the Varnița Village Hall in Anenii Noi rayon supports the consolidation of the public procurement, ensuring the public credibility of this process.

The local public authority is responsible both for the monitoring of public procurement contracts and for carrying out actions in the field in accordance with the legislation in force.

ACTIVITIES

Starting in 2017, public procurements announcements and contracts are placed four times a year, that is, once a quarter on the Varnița Village Hall website - <http://varnita.md/>. And in order to streamline the public procurement process, the public procurement specialist from the Town Hall elaborates the public procurement plan, which is later published on the local authority's website.

Between April and June 2018, for the second quarter of this year, the following materials were published on the official website of the Varnița Village Hall: an announcement/invitation to participate in the contest and six contracts amounting to 224894,80 lei, including VAT. In total, 41 public procurement contracts have been made publicly available since the beginning of the year. Most contracts concluded relate to the purchase of food for the nursing of children in educational institutions. In addition, a 240,000 lei contract was concluded on April 18, 2018, for repairs inside the Village Hall. Also, on the page of the Town Hall, in the section "Public Procurement" some contracts concluded in 2017 and published this year can be found. Thus, among the most expensive works and services for which public procurement contracts have been concluded can be mentioned the landscaping modernization in the amount of 239 thousand lei and the modernization of the street lighting, for which Varnița village hall had to allocate 200 thousand lei. The most expensive contract published on the website is about repairing a section of road that provides access to the village, concluded in July 2018 worth 424 643 lei, shows the page <http://varnita.md/>.

According to the Public Procurement Plan in 2018, Varnița Village Hall planned public procurement worth 2 million 160 thousand lei, the most expensive referring to food for children's nutrition and landscaping modern-

ization services. At the end of this year, the Village Hall intends to prepare the village's Social-economic development Strategy, and one of the priorities will include ensuring transparency of the decision-making process, including in the field of public procurement.

BENEFICIARIES

Representatives of the local public authority, providers and economic agents and, most importantly, Varnița village inhabitants - 5 214 people, both beneficiaries of the public services offered, as well as the actors involved in the monitoring of the efficiency of the use of public money.

IMPACT

According to the public officials from Varnița Village Hall, the measures implemented for the transparency of the public procurement process have determined the improvement of the communication and cooperation between the Varnița Village Hall and the Public Procurement Agency, the service providers, the economic agents, including the beneficiaries.

COMMENTS

Every citizen has the right to know how public money is spent, including those in local budgets, to which he contributes. Transparency must, therefore, be ensured at all stages of the public procurement process, starting with its planning and implementation of the contract, payment and delivery of goods or execution of works. The publication of the purchase contracts by the Varnița Village Hall is an action demonstrating maximum openness and transparency, all the more so as it is not mandatory under the law. Transparency of public procurement is a very important thing to ensure the integrity of the local public authority, and this policy should be respected by each town hall in the Republic of Moldova, thus contributing to increasing the level of transparency in the public procurement process and increasing access to public information.

On the one hand, transparency in public procurement is crucial to achieving a good level of bidders' competition, increasing City Hall's accountability and accountability to institutions and individuals involved in the process. On the other hand, any inhabitant of Varnița village, a civil society representative or interested person could have access to the entire public procurement process in a budget year, can monitor the efficiency of public money use and the quality of the execution of procurement contracts, and have committed irregularities and the illegalities detected in the system. However, it is necessary to ensure full, timely and accessible publication of all contracts. Analyzing the information published on the Mayor's website, we notice the irregular publication of the contracts, the format of the documents (scanned) that do not allow the analysis, the application of the filters and the search engines. Also, according to the members of the Evaluation Board, the transparency of the public procurement process is a competence of the local authorities, stipulated in the legislation.

Scores: **QUALITY [+1.7]** **RELEVANCE [73.0%]**

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURES THAT RECEIVED A NEGATIVE ASSESSMENT

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Title: COMPANIES OF THE HEAD OF THE TELENESTI DEPARTMENT OF CONSTRUCTIONS, FAVORITE IN THE CONTESTS ORGANIZED IN THE RAYON

Information source: The portal www.moldovacurata.md. Article published on April 26, 2018

The measure violated by the rayonal public authority:

Favouritism and conflict of interest in the public procurement process

The budget of Telenești rayon is a source of revenue for the companies of local councilors, mayors of the rayon or employees of the rayon administration. In the field of construction and repair of buildings and repair of roads, a special segment of the public auctions belongs to the companies belonging to the family of the head of the construction section, Iacob Stegărescu. Two companies of his family, “Maristecons” and “Prodpan”, are constantly earning service contracts either at the mayoralties of the rayon or at different state institutions subordinated to the Rayon Council. Iacob Stegărescu, even if he is not part of the competition commissions in the procurement process, is the person who draws up / approves the annual repair plans and authorizes the works.

The most expensive works were given to the official's daughter's firm

For the first firm, “Maristecons”, founded and managed by Margareta Lupașco, daughter of Iacob Stegărescu, the participation in the procurement competitions from the General Direction of Education (DGE) Telenești is a routine activity. In 2017, out of the 12 tenders, 3 were given to this firm. According to the Telenești Rayon Council, the value of the contracts obtained by “Maristecons” represents almost half of the value of all the bidding. If the 5 economic agents jointly executed works of 876,397 lei, then the Stegarescu family got three “big” contracts, worth a total of 642,737 lei.

In the reports of the contests won by “Maristecons” it is said that the working groups chose this company precisely because it proposed the lowest prices. In 2016, “Maristecons” won a single contract in the DGE, out of the 7 bids, worth 16,335 lei. His son, Serghei Stegărescu, was contracted to perform repair works at the Vasile Alecsandri Rayonal Public Library with the amount of 28,515 lei.

Tenders won at the mayoralities of the rayon

“Maristecons” also benefits from contracts for the repair of schools and kindergartens and in the tenders organized by the mayoralities in the rayon. Another company, “Prodpan” SRL, in which the founder is Iacob Stegărescu, and his wife, Teodora Stegărescu, is managing, obtaining contracts for the repair of buildings and roads. In December 2017 the Telenești Rayonal Council awarded to this economic agent, along with other 13, the title of the best entrepreneur of Telenești rayon. At that time Iacob Stegărescu was already leading the construction section. In the communique of the event, placed on the official website of the Telenești rayon - www.telenesti.md, it is said that the “turnover and results achieved in 2016” were taken into account.

More information on “[Firmele șefului secției construcții Telenești, favorite la concursurile de achiziții organizate în raion](#)” article.

COMMENTS

Favoritism, conflicts of interest, and secret (illegal) agreements are some of the most common violations in the public procurement system. These corruption acts “dry up” local budgets, dampen economic agents to enter the procurement market, which reduces competition, discourages healthy competition in public procurement, and violates citizens’ rights to quality public services. Corruption in public procurement is the most serious problem for the system, and its cost is 20-25% of a contract. In the absence of immediate measures to counteract this phenomenon, the few billions of lei that pass annually through the procurement system will be used inefficiently and even fraudulently. In this respect, cases of favoritism in the public procurement process must be made public. This will increase the level of transparency in managing the local budget, inform citizens correctly about public procurement procedures and involve local elected officials and civil servants in dubious schemes.

Scores: **QUALITY [-2.4] RELEVANCE [83.0%]**

Title: CORRUPT INVOLVEMENT OF THE LOCAL ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES IN THE COMMUNE OF TRUȘENI IN THE ALIENATION OF THE PUBLIC LANDS

Information source: **The portal www.crimemoldova.md. Article published on June 29, 2018**

Measure violated by the local public authority:

Fraud and fraudulent management of public patrimony

At the beginning of June 2018, the National Anticorruption Center (CAN) announced the disclosure of a land estrangement scheme in Trușeni by means of a fruit concession. The scheme would include the mayor of the village of Trușeni, Ion Apostol, the president of the fruit pump in the municipality and a former cadastral engineer. According to the communications officer of the CNA, Victor Timuș-Loza, on June 14, the home arrest was ordered, after which the decision was appealed to the Chisinau Court of Appeal: “From June 20, the Mayor of Trușeni is in preventive arrest in the isolator CNA and further prosecution actions are carried out. Has procedural accusation”.

According to prosecutors, group members would have identified willing to buy land, after which they would have legalized them by falsifying several documents. To give a legal trace to the transaction, the suspects would have forged certificates of ownership, giving them fictitious registration numbers, attesting to the beneficiary’s right to land. As a rule, buyers were given the right of ownership with a registration number in the 1990s when a fruit plot was formed and could, therefore, be considered members of the full land plots. Even if the de facto transactions took place in the post-2000 period.

Previously, in an investigation “Crime Moldova”, there were also submitted other land-alien schemes in Trușeni, which would have taken place with the involvement of the mayor of the municipality. Thus, a project of a company from Chisinau regarding the construction of a residential complex of luxury villas put the inhabitants of the village in the spring. People were indignant that the project, which started without being consulted, would have harmed the local budget by about 11 million lei and would have left them without 6 hectares in the village.

More in the article “[Primarul comunei Trușeni și un complice, reținuți de CNA pentru înstrăinarea terenurilor publice](#)”.

COMMENTS

Public property management (real estate, land) is very vulnerable to the risks of corruption, due to the increased interest in public goods, but also to the discretion of the local public administrations. Such cases are unfortunately unfortunately and always involve the decision-makers or the heads of the institutions, in this case, the Mayor of Trușeni. Regretfully, local officials understand distorted what their obligations are during the man-

date, and fraudulent abuse and management of the estate cause the revenue to be reduced and lost to the local budget. This explains why it is vital that, first of all, the leader of a public institution be an honest, responsible and integral person. And although the measure described is clearly an abuse with a high impact, the members of the Evaluation Board believe that journalistic investigations on the fraudulent management of public patrimony must be sustained to discourage corruption. Therefore, this article may be an example for local elected candidates and pursuing certain meshing interests.

Scores: **Quality [-2.3]** **Relevance [87.7%]**

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