



Press release

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TOP of the most TRANSPARENT municipalities in Moldova! Bălți, Cimișlia and Cahul, first in the ranking

Bălți, Cimișlia and Cahul are the most transparent localities in the Republic of Moldova, and Strășeni, Fălești and Cahul - the most transparent rayons in the country in 2018, which is why they were awarded. The ranking of the most open local public authorities, conducted by the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) "Viitorul" together with INEKO Slovakia, was presented today, November 8, at a public conference.

“For three years we have a fruitful cooperation with our partners in Slovakia and during this period IDIS have learned a lot. We have learned the methodology for identifying the most transparent local authorities and have found out what financial sustainability measurement tools are. Thus, we have taken a step forward to strengthen local public authorities in Moldova. Also, although the country's average transparency is below 40%, there are authorities that are beginning to dictate the tone in this direction, and the trends are gratifying in terms of transparency”, stated IDIS Director, Liubomir Chiriac.

In turn, Maroš Kramár, Development Cooperation Diplomat at Embassy of the Slovakia in Chisinau mentioned: *“I am glad that the financial support of the SlovakAaid and engaging cooperation of the partner organizations INEKO and IDIS Viitorul brings positive results in the form of awards for the most open local public authorities. Many thanks belong also to the municipalities, which tried to be part of the project and had the effort to be more transparent for the needs of their citizens. May the great examples be a pattern for the rest of municipalities in Moldova for the future”.*

„The aim of our initiative was to improve the level of openness of the authorities to the citizens and after three years we can see significant progress in this respect, which is a good sign. I am happy to see that the results of monitoring local transparency in Moldova are positive and the authorities have become more transparent. The objective of our efforts is to have a qualitative democracy in Moldova by empowering citizens and correctly informing them about the transparency and financial sustainability of local governments”, underlined the INEKO director, Peter Golias.

Those 60 municipalities (40 towns and 20 largest villages/communes) and 32 rayons were evaluated and ranked in the following nine criteria of transparency: access to information, participation in decision-making, budgeting, public procurement, management of public property, professional ethics and conflict of interests, human resources, social services, investments, municipal companies and participation in companies. The maximum of the accrued points was 100. Thus, the **most transparent municipalities are Bălți (82 points), Cimișlia (62 points) and Cahul (62 points)**. Also, **the most transparent local public authorities of the second level II are the rayon councils from Strășeni (78 points), Fălești (64 points) and Cahul (58 points)**.

During the three years of monitoring, local and regional public administrations have evolved in their openness to citizens. Strășeni advanced the most in the transparency ranking, followed by Sîngerei, Cărpineni and Ialoveni. Thus, from 2016 to the present, the overall average transparency increased by 4.87 percentage points for local

government at level I and 7.34 percentage points for local government level II. Although the overall average for the municipalities is 23.55% out of the 100 maximum possible, and the general average for the rayons is 37.28%, the great majority of the local public authorities level I and II have constantly improved their level of transparency, fact which led to higher scoring and a better place compared to previous years. Among the positive examples are the Bălți municipality, which occupies the first position for two years in the top, with an average of over 80% (A +), Strășeni which has the highest progress in the score (+50.2 points) and ranking (+39 places). At the rayon level is about the Strășeni Rayon Council, which ranks first for two years in the top with an average of over 78% in 2018 (A), and Cahul district had the highest score in 2018 (+46.6 points) and climbed 3rd place in the ranking (+26 positions), is shown in the report on monitoring the activity of local public administration in terms of openness to citizens.

"Local public authorities have become more open over time and have begun to make more use of webpages to bring public information to citizens. At the same time, the 2018 ranking finds the first example of drafting and publishing the Code of Ethics for local elected officials, and although it is not compulsory in Moldova, three local governments and a rayon administration publish public procurement contracts on their official website", considers Viorel Pîrvan, author of the transparency report.

According to the monitoring report, **the best examples of access to information are the Cimișlia Town Hall (97 points) and Sîngerei rayon (94 points)**. As regards the participation in the decision-making process, the Bălți municipality and the Strășeni Rayon Council have retained their first position in recent years. With regard to public procurement, **most authorities (29 localities and 9 districts) publish public procurement notices, and less the procurement results**. At the same time, although it is important for authorities to publish public procurement contracts on their websites and civil society to monitor them, this is not done. Respectively, **only on the website of Bălți, the villages of Costești, Varnița and on the Strășeni rayon Council, we find the public procurement contracts**.

In terms of budgetary transparency, **34 local authorities of the first level and 27 rayon councils published the 2018 budget on the web**. The study also highlights the fact that although 24 mayoralties have made public on the Mayor's CV on the web site, **the declarations of income and property of the mayor, deputy mayors and civil servants are published only on the web page of the mayoralties in Cahul and Cimișlia**. In the district authorities, the **Râșcani rayon is the only rayon that has published on the web site the Code of ethics for local elected representatives**.

The ranking of the most transparent local public authorities shows that **58 mayoralties and 30 rayon councils did not make public through the web page the public vacancies in 2017** and only the Bălți municipality, the Călărași Town Hall and the rayon councils from Strășeni and Sîngerei did this thing.

Other chapters analyzed are "public services" and "investments, municipal enterprises and participation in commercial companies". Thus, the Bălți Town Hall and Fălești Rayon Council are the best examples of accessibility to the information on social services for the population. Also, **only 13 mayoralties and two district councils publish on the web the information about the programs and projects**, whose beneficiaries or executors are. At the district level, only the Fălești rayon administration has published on the web the CV's of the managers of the municipal enterprises.

Top of the most transparent municipalities in the Republic of Moldova can be found on the open data portal: <http://localtransparency.viitorul.org/>.

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The event was held within the initiative „Promoting transparency and financial sustainability of regional policies, state – owned enterprises and local authorities in Moldova”, implemented by IDIS "Viitorul", in partnership with the Institute for Economic and Social Reforms in Slovakia (INEKO). The initiative is financially supported by the Official Development Assistance of the Slovak Republic (SlovakAid). It aims to improve the efficiency of the state administration, self-government and civil society in the area of creation and control of regional policies, administration of state-owned enterprises, and monitoring of budgets and information openness of municipalities.

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