Comparative analysis of existing legal and institutional conditions necessary to achieve the publicity, transparency and partnership, and results of the interview

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Ensuring transparency in the work of the local administration

The aim of our study was to provide answers to questions related to ensuring transparency in the work of municipal administration and availability of information on services, comparing the situation as seen from two points of view, from the perspective of citizens - service users, and from the perspective of service providers - representatives of municipal administrations.

Based on answers to questions in the interview with representatives of the municipal administration, it can be concluded that the main way of ensuring transparency in the work of the local administration, in fact, is providing access to information to citizens about all kind of the activities of local administration. Access to this type of information is possible to achieve in many ways:

- through the publication of various types of documents, orders, decisions, reports and so on. These publications can be:
    - a paper issues in the form of brochures, flyers, notices attached on bulletin boards or distributed to the citizens in other ways,
    - published on the website, whether the official site of the municipal administration or any other sites that are aimed at informing citizens,
    - published by the media -local TV, newspaper, official newsletter of municipal administration,
- through public live broadcasts of local parliament session,
- through regular press conferences, briefings, press releases, meetings of PR with the media,
- in direct contact of representatives of the municipal administration with citizens or in the so-called open day.

However, it is also important for citizens to show some interest in the information about local administration. This could improve the transparency of local administration. In fact, most of the people become interested in a service and in a local administration work only in situations when they have a particular problem. Even then people are interested only in few aspects of the municipal administration which is closely related to their problem. Generally, people rarely show an interest in local administration just for curiosity.

The previous claim is based on an answer to the question from the interview " Information about the municipal administration are sufficient and available". Most of interviewed citizens gave a low grade of accuracy of this claim, but also a low grade to the positive side of this aspect. It can be noted that nearly a quarter of respondents did not answer to this claim.

Informations about municipal administration are sufficient and available - correct

- 1,00: 15,54
- 2,00: 18,24
- 3,00: 21,22
- 4,00: 15,41
- 5,00: 11,89
- 6,00: 7,70
- 7,00: 4,86
- no answewr: 5,14
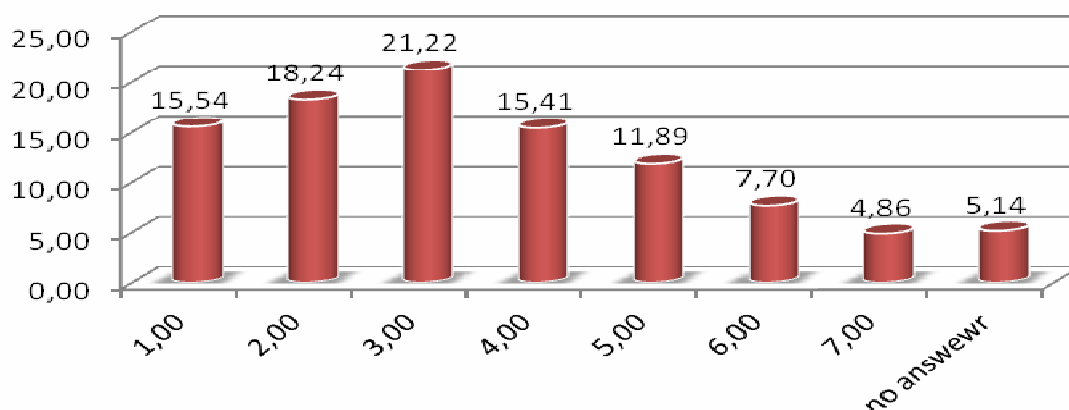
Informations about municipal administration are sufficient and available - positive

- 1,00: 20,81
- 2,00: 13,65
- 3,00: 13,65
- 4,00: 11,49
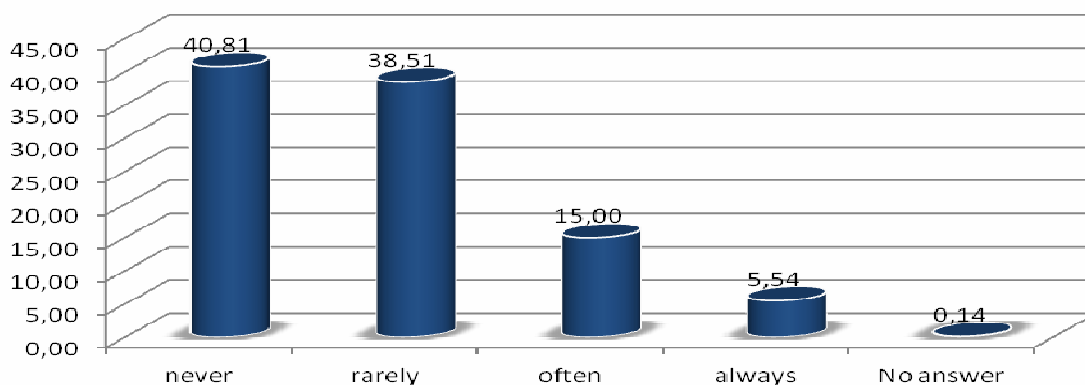- 5,00: 7,03
- 6,00: 4,86
- 7,00: 4,32
- no answer: 24,19
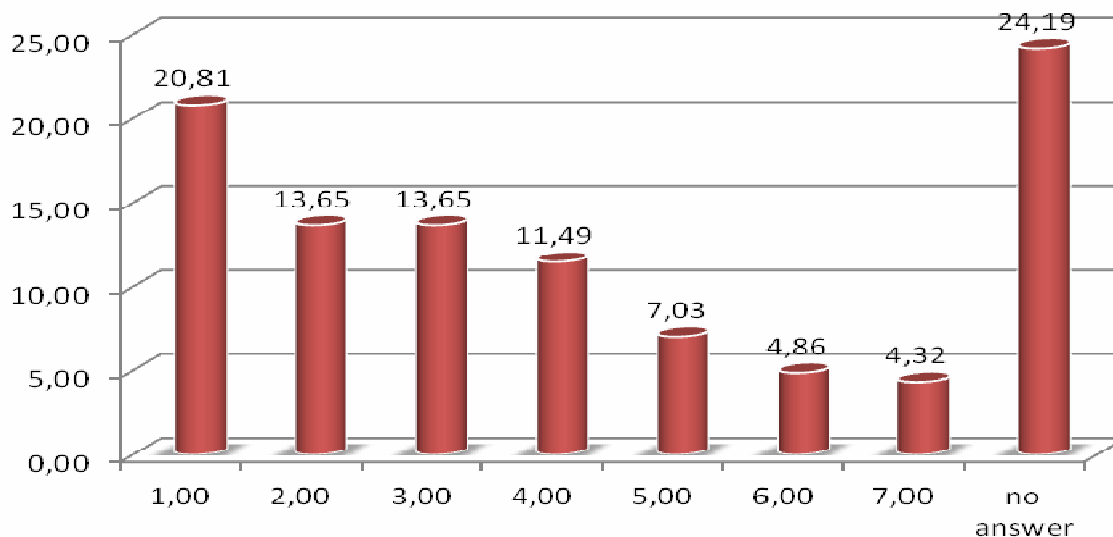
Also, a low level of transparency confirm the answers to some other questions that are related to different aspects of knowing local administration
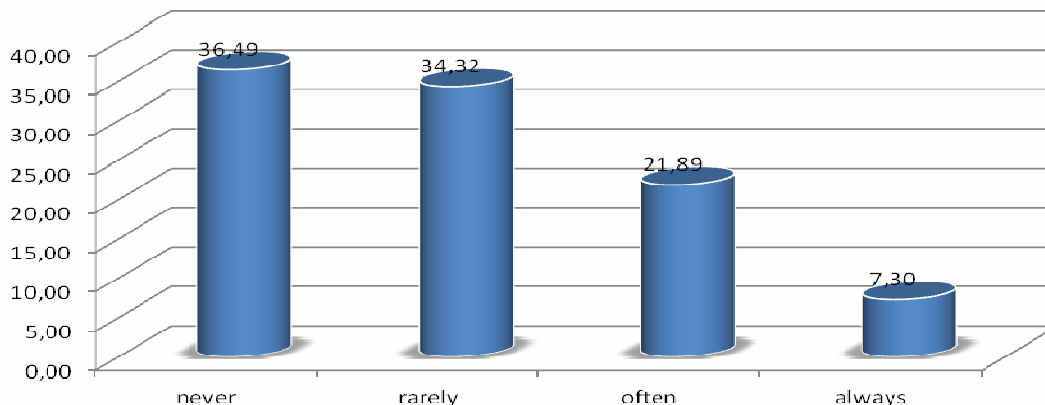
Do you know the rules about complaints and suggestions

I don't know anything	I know few things	I know everything	No answer
45,81	42,16	11,49	0,54
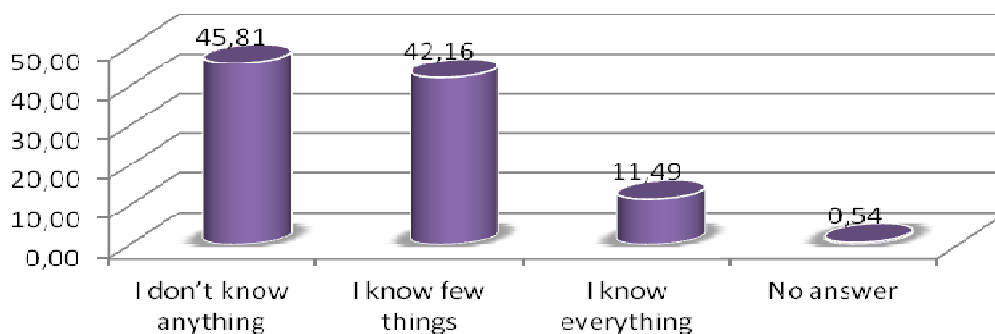
Is the information about competitions transparent

never	rarely	often	always	No answer
40,81	38,51	15,00	5,54	0,14

Is the information about European and international funds sufficient

never	rarely	often	always
36,49	34,32	21,89	7,30

Is the information about decisions and resolutions sufficient
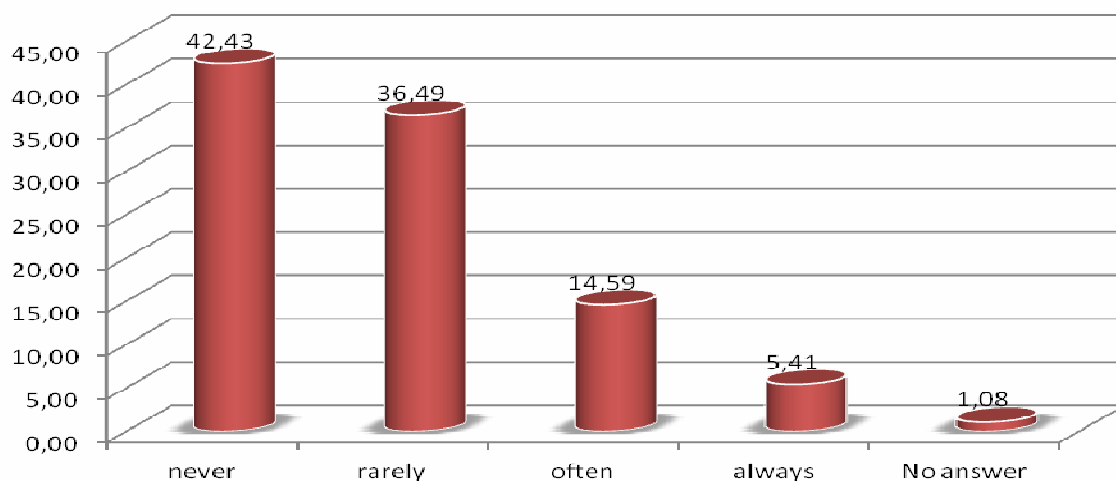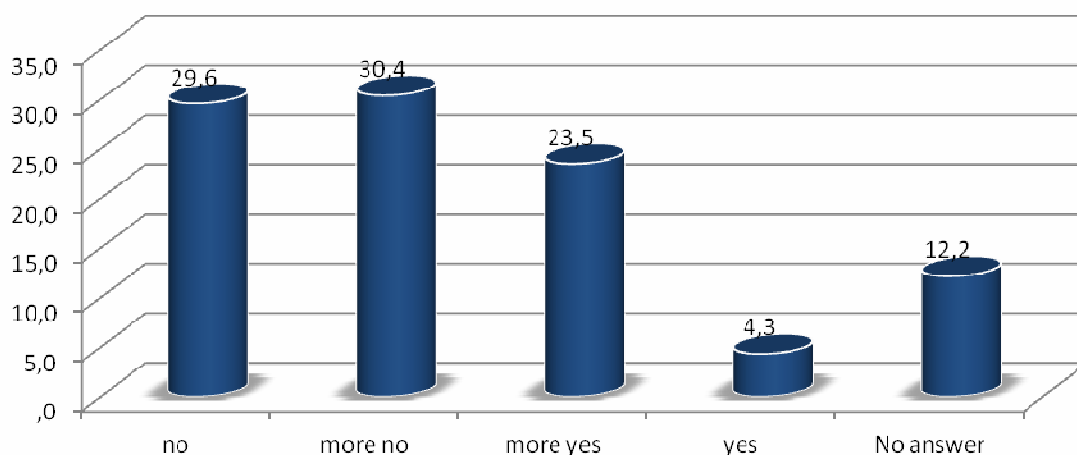

## Is there enough information on the municipal web sites

As can be seen, most citizens do not have, for some reason, enough information on various aspects of municipal administration. Of course, there are a lot of reasons, from the indifference of citizens, various computer literacy, lack of information from the local administration.

The availability and sufficiency of information on the services of the municipal administration

Ensuring the quality of local administration services and their permanent progress must be a priority for local governments, no matter how much difficult it is.

One of the objectives is the service "all in one place." In most municipalities that participated in the interview there are special offices or service centers. Representatives of the municipalities have given answers that were presented in the following chart
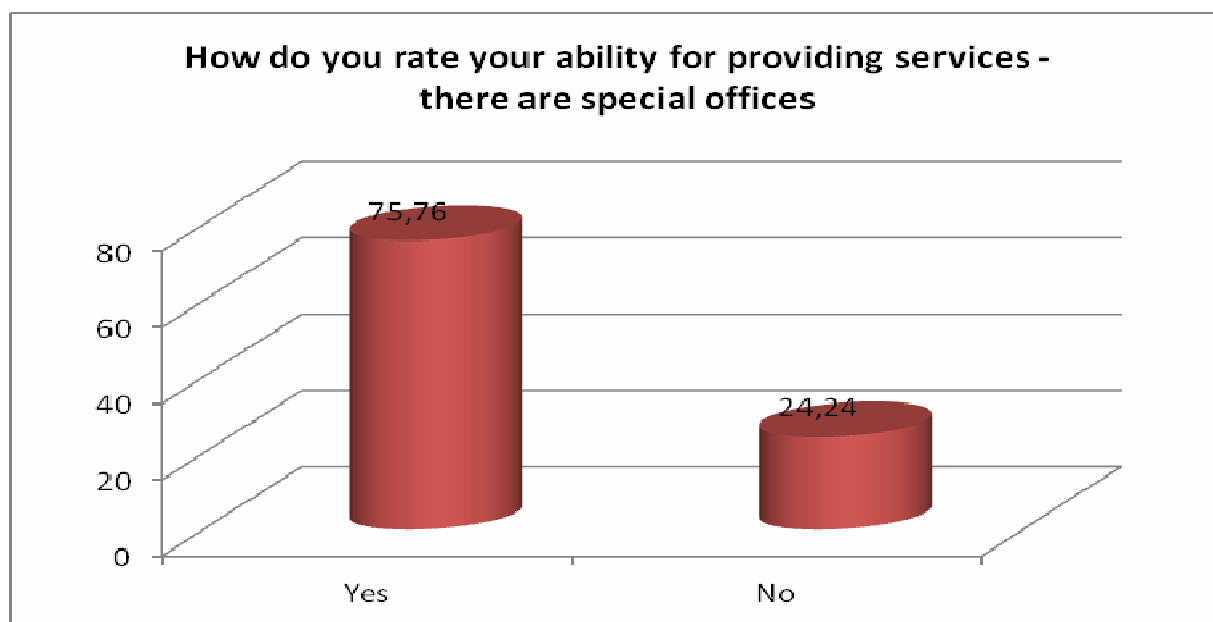
Also, an important aspect of availability of information are specific approaches and ramps for people with disabilities or for people with special needs. Unfortunately, nearly two-thirds of municipal government, according to representatives, do not have adequate access built for people with special needs.

How do you rate your ability for providing services – there are a facilities for persons with disabilities
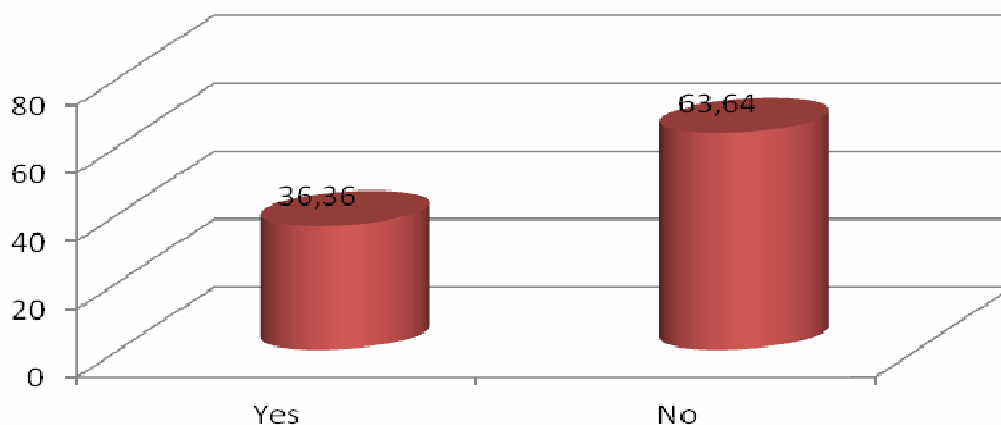
Comparing the answers of interviewed citizens and representatives of municipals administration we can conclude that these two opinions about availability of informations from local administrations are similar.

The distribution of ansvers on the question about services "all in one place" are shown on the next chart

How do you rate the services in your municipality
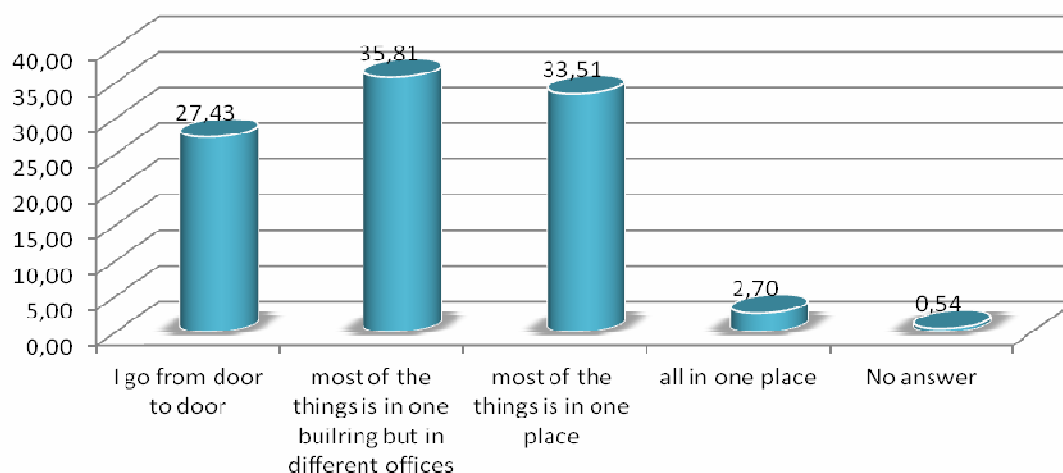
So, a quarter of clients does not solve their problems "in one place". We find that most municipalities are just in the beginning of implementation of the principle "all in one place".
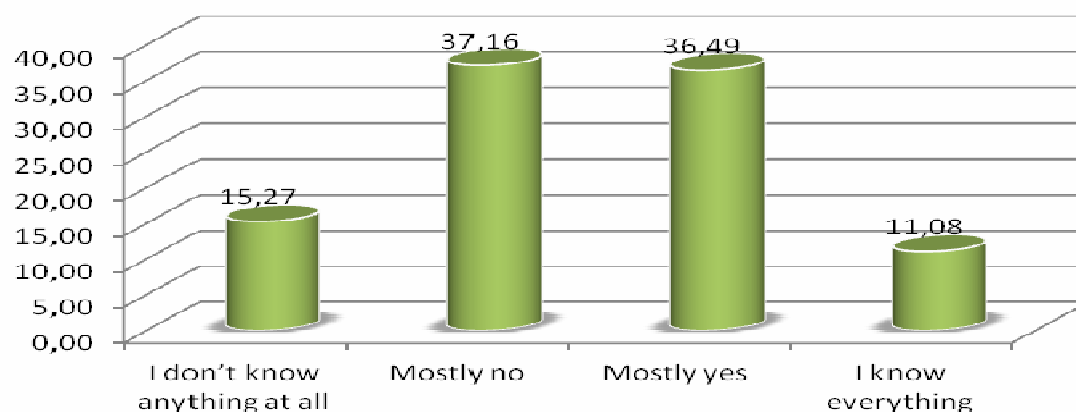
Regarding to an access for people with special needs, we see that the vast majority of people negatively rated the conditions in their municipals. There are a serious problems in the pace of implementation of the statutory standard, so that opinion of citizens is completely justified.

There are facilities for persons with disabilities - correct
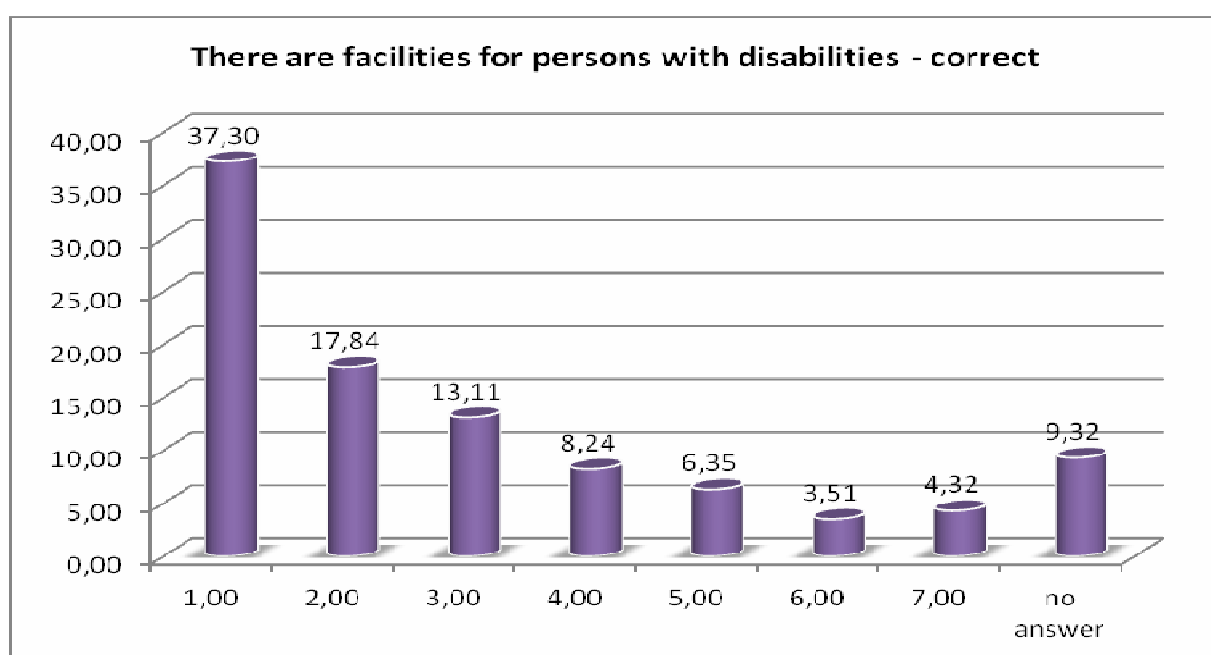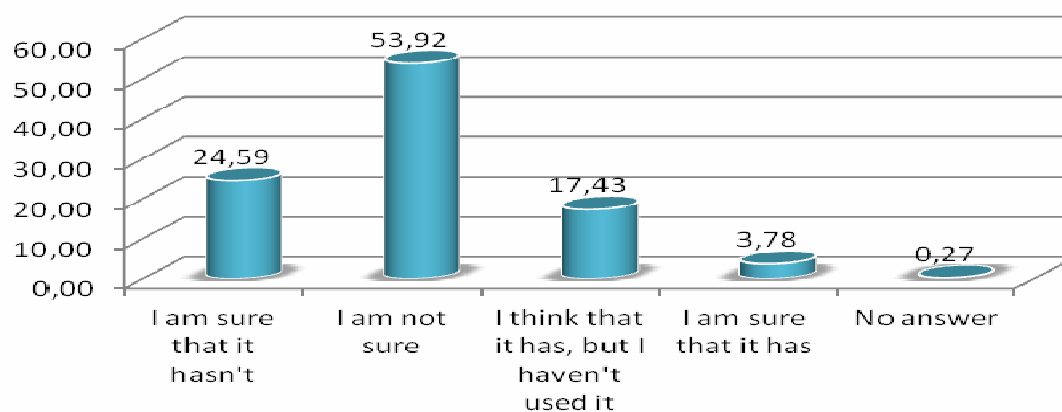

Regarding to the availability of the information from local administrations, we can see on following charts that a medium level is achieved and that there is still a room for improvement. In fact it is necessary to reject inherited negative habits from the information system and to encourage citizens to pressure the administration to improve the information system to the necessary level.

Do you have following inforamtions - total

Category	Value
I don't know anything at all	15,27
Mostly no	37,16
Mostly yes	36,49
I know everything	11,08

Has your municipality visibly set a way of complaining

Category	Value
I am sure that it hasn't	24,59
I am not sure	53,92
I think that it has, but I haven't used it	17,43
I am sure that it has	3,78
No answer	0,27

Do you get enough information from media

Category	Value
I can't get any information	19,05
I can get some information	49,32
I can often get some information	25,41
I can always get enough information	5,54
No answer	0,68

Is the information about European and international funds sufficient

Category	Value
never	36,49
rarely	34,32
often	21,89
always	7,30

Is the information about decisions and resolutions sufficient

	never	rarely	often	always	No answer
	42,43	36,49	14,59	5,41	1,08

Is there enough information on the municipal web sites

	no	more no	more yes	yes	No answer
	29,6	30,4	23,5	4,3	12,2

Transparency in the work of municipal administrations and the corruption risk

The problem of corruption is one of the most important issues that must be solved to improve and ensure transparency and availability of information on the work and on decisions of the municipal administration. There is a widespread opinion among the citizens that nothing in the public sector can not be completed without the bribe.

In this section we analyze the opinions of representatives of municipal administration and the opinions of citizens about the existence of corruption in municipal administration. A large number of municipal administration has not links to institutions that fight corruption on their websites, although this is a priority of the Republic of Serbia in the accession process to the EU and in development of the institutions.

Asked about corruption and anti-corruption policy, most of the interviewed representatives noted some anti-corruption measures. Only 3% of municipal administrations still has not any anti-corruption measure. Most frequent anti-corruption measures are:

- a contact with citizens (complaints)
- an internal control
- a local strategies
- publicity and transparency in the work

How do you rate them
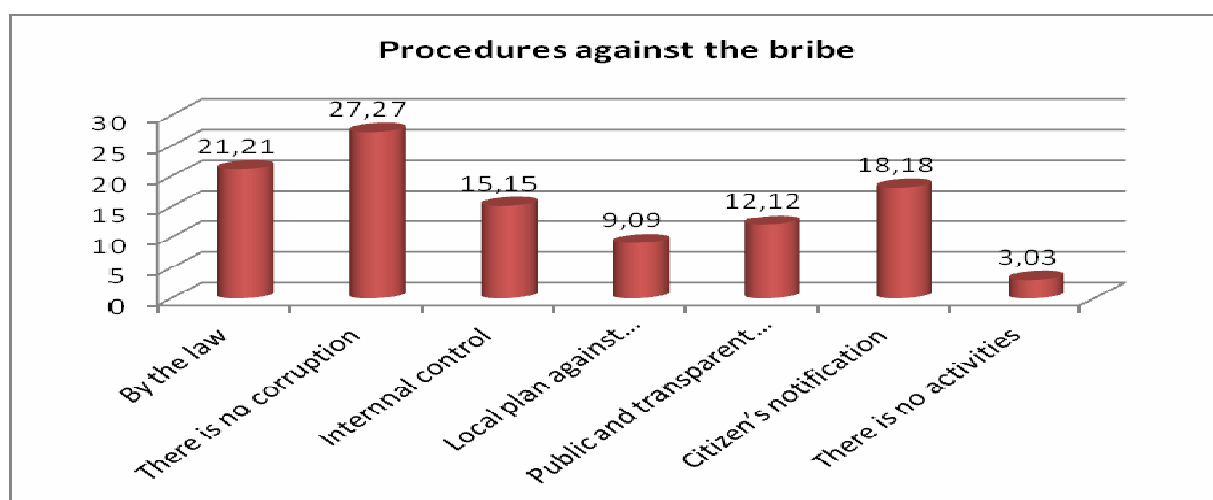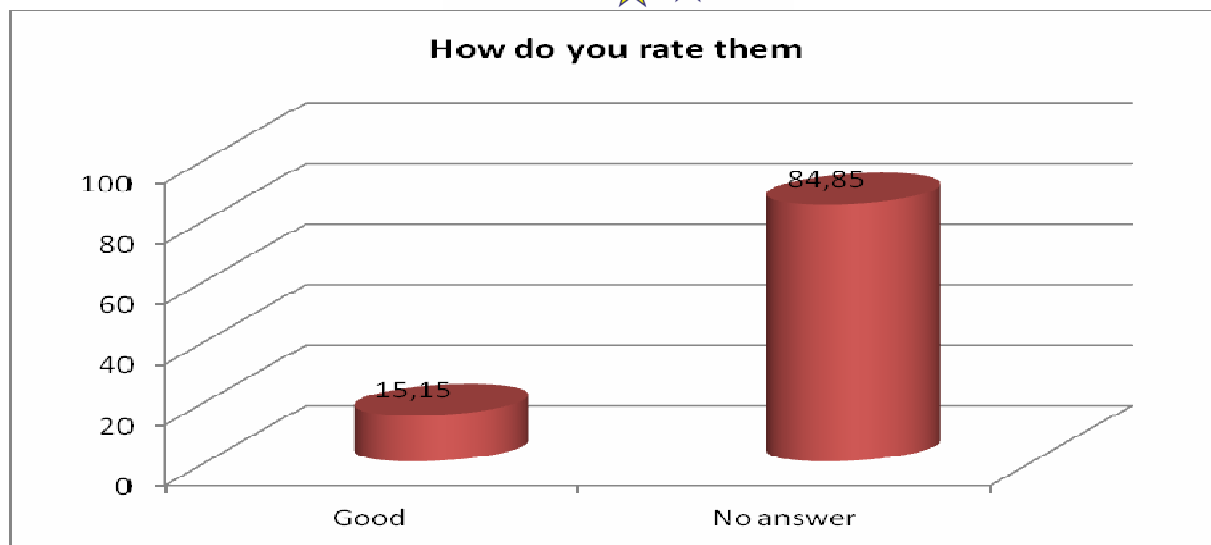
But, as already mentioned, among the citizens there is still an impression of corruption in the municipal administration. As shown in the following charts, from the uniformly distributed answers, distinguish negative ratings on the fact that corruption exists. So we conclude that the anti-corruption measures, however, have results. As expected, the majority of citizens negatively rate the presence of corruption in the local administration.

You need to give a bribe to be served — correct
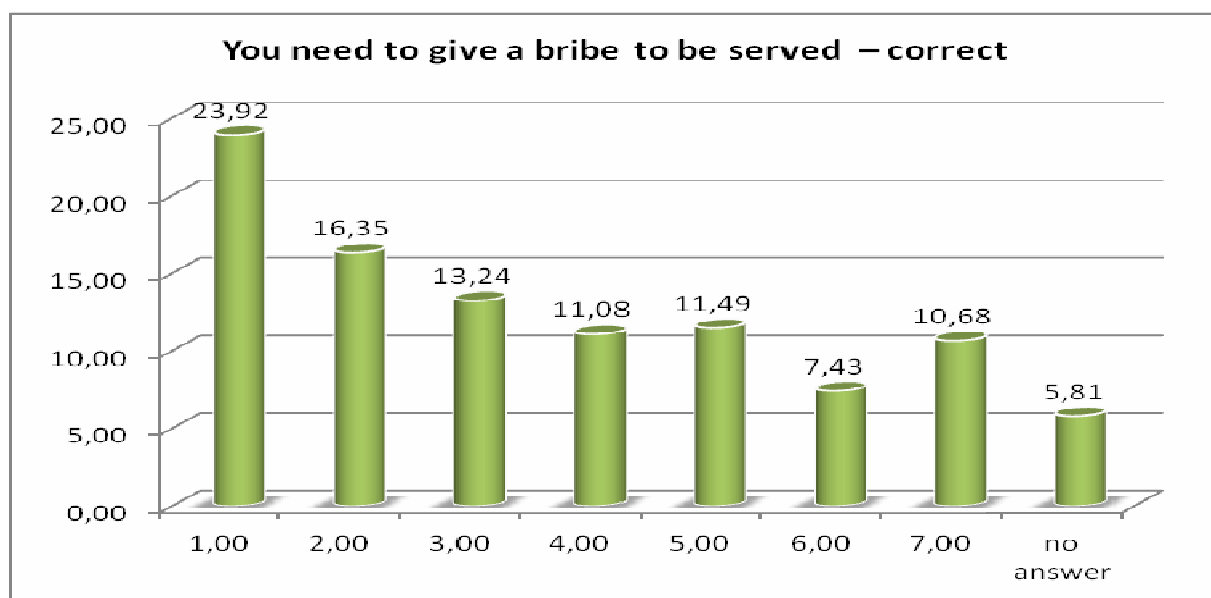
You need to give a bribe to be served — positive

	1,00	2,00	3,00	4,00	5,00	6,00	7,00	no answer
	27,03	9,59	6,49	6,08	4,86	7,30	15,14	23,51
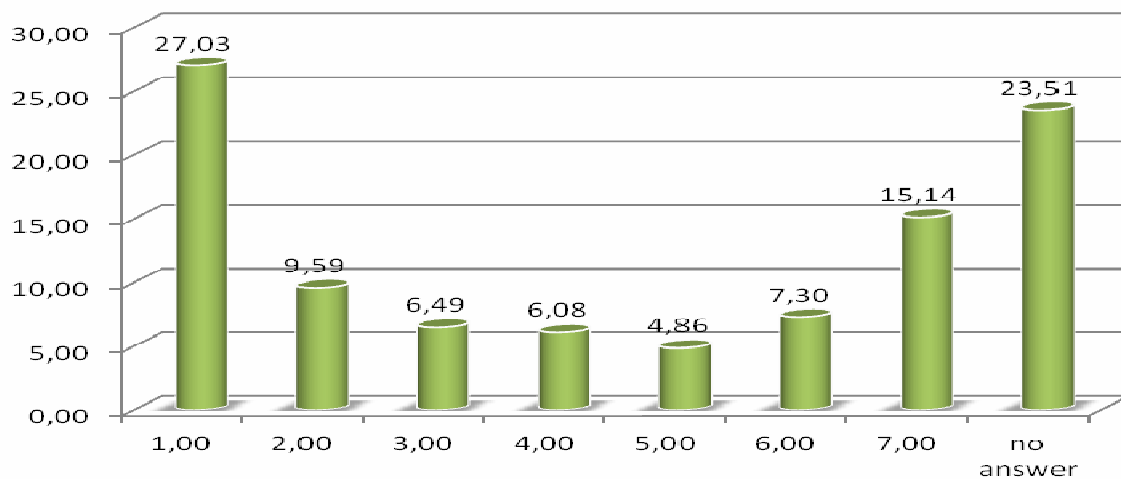
List of implemented projects in order to improve the transparency of municipal administrations

Based on interviews with representatives of the municipal administration, we made the list of the most frequent projects and initiatives that have implemented in order to improve the transparency and availability of informations from the municipal administration.

	frequency	%
Creation of official website	11	33,33
Live broadcasts of local parliament session	4	12,12
Public discussions, meetings with citizens, information for citizens	13	39,39
Information displayed on the bulletin boards	2	6,06
Information through the media	4	12,12
Periodically publishing the lists of employees and their sallaries	1	3,03
Official newsletter of municipal administration	4	12,12
Creating computer network of all offices	1	3,03
Public presentation of the budget revenue and expenses	3	9,09
Internet forum	3	9,09
Open days	2	6,06
Participation in various projects	1	3,03
No answer	6	18,18

Conclusion

Na osnovu izvedenih anketa, može se doći do sledećih zaključaka:

Postoji napredak u vezi sa uvođenjem novih inicijativa. Sve je više funkcionalnih sajtova, obučenog osoblja, uslužnih centara, ljubaznog osoblja i smanjenje negativne prakse.

Postoji primetna inicijativa u jačanju anti-korupcijske borbe. Samo 3% anketiranih opštinskih uprava nema definisan sistem za borbu protiv korupcije.

I dalje veliki broj ispitanika (skoro polovina) daje nisku ocenu ljubaznosti i predusretljivosti službenika.

On the basis of the interview, we can conclude the following:

There is a progress in the introduction process of new initiatives. There are more functional sites, trained staff, service centers, friendly staff and a reduction in negative practices.

There is significant initiative in strengthening anti-corruption policy. Only 3% of the municipal administration still has not defined an anti-corruption measures.
And still a large number of respondents (almost half) gives a low rate to courtesy and kindness of employees.

Still there is not enough interest of citizens for information and decisions from the municipal administration. The municipality is still a place where one goes only to solve a particular problem. There is a tendency to skip the articles about the work of lacal administrations in the newspapers as most boring. A large number of citizens still do not use the internet, and thus the information posted online do not reach the target group. Only a small circle of people get the majority of information related to the work and decisions of local authorities.

A very high percentage of municipalities has a lack of technically trained staff. 45% of municipal administration stated that their staff is technicaly untrained or partially trained. Direct contact between the representatives of municipal administration and citizens is still very rare. A relatively small number of municipalities organize public discussions, open doors and similar events. It is necessary to implement the decentralized training of staff.

There are few projects which are organized in cooperation with several municipalities which are in direct relation to civil initiatives. One of solutions to improve the transparency and availability of information is the internet. It is a modern way of communication. Unfortunately, a large percentage of people still do not use it. Also, a large percentage of municipal personnel needs partial or complete training so the application of innovative technologies gives good results.

We can say that there is some progress in the transparency and availability to information from municipal administration. However, it is noticed that there is a plenty of room for imporving mentioned aspects of relations between citizens and municipal administration. All opportunities must be considered in order to improve these aspects of relations between citizens and municipal administration.

It is expected that the during this project, in accordance with the information that are now available, the municipal administration significantly improve their work in order to create a good service for citizens.