



# NEWS DIGEST

of the Joint Integrated  
Local Development Programme

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## Transparency Week

a further opportunity  
for authority-citizen dialogue

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**Serghei PALIHOVICI**  
Deputy Secretary General of the  
Government, State Chancellery  
of the Republic of Moldova

The Government of the Republic of Moldova reiterates its commitment in promotion of local autonomy, decentralization, development and transparency in local decision making, as part of the actions of European scale and importance.

For the very purpose of bringing the government closer to citizens, the State Chancellery has launched this year a call to local communities and associations representing local government administration to join in the actions conducted during the European Week of Local Democracy (EWLD) and organize activities designed to increase local transparency.

I want to thank the representatives of local public administration who have planned to organize community-level events purported to increase citizen participation.



**Nicola HARRINGTON-BUHAY,**  
United Nations Resident  
Coordinator

Building confidence in local authorities takes years and permanent efforts. The fact that the Transparency Week has brought together a large number of municipalities shows that a foundation for local democracy development has been successfully set up in Moldova.

The example of these municipalities should be taken over by other communities, in a manner that would allow all Moldova's towns and villages to have in place local authorities that know how to talk to citizens and citizens who want to hear the local authorities out and get involved in decision making.

Transparency is the key element in the development of a village, a district and finally, a state.

Together with the Moldovan Government, mayors and people in local communities, we have accomplished many important things in this area. I would like to use this opportunity to thank them for our fruitful cooperation. We plan to further implement local democracy in Moldova, because we want as many „Villages that speak” as possible.



**Stefan VLAS,**  
mayor of Sarata-Galbena  
commune (Hincesti )

Sarata-Galbena local authorities pay special attention to the interaction with the village's residents. Many beautiful things were created in the commune, but none of them would have been possible without the people's support. This is why we strive to enhance the people's trust in the institution of local government. However, attaining such a desideratum is possible only through transparency and communication.



**Radu URECHEAN,**  
mayor of Larga commune  
(Briceni)

Communication with its citizens is the most important thing for any local authority, because everything the local government does becomes possible only when its citizens are involved. Our Town Hall has several ways of communicating with the residents of the commune. I, for instance, don't want to monologue in the meeting chamber. That's why I insisted, and with joint efforts, managed to arrange the meeting chamber in a fashion that predisposes in favour of a constructive dialogue during Larga Local Council meetings.



## About 65 thousand people had the opportunity to get to know better their local authorities during the *Transparency Week*



Collector Petru Costin showcases radio devices from the 1924-1990 period, included in the Customs Service Museum collection

During the Transparency Week, citizens from more than 30 municipalities from 17 districts of the state became closer to their local Town Halls and Councils. This is all due to the fact that between October 13 to October 19, mayors, local councillors, but also community opinion leaders have conducted more than 150 local activities.



Sărata Galbenă residents gathered at the Transparency Week launching ceremony

"The Moldovan Government has particularly emphasized on improving local governance processes through actions of promoting transparency in decision making and enhancing dialogue with community members. We are pleased that an impressive number of districts have responded to that call. During this week, mayors, councillors and community members have conducted activities designed to bring the institution of the Town Hall closer to the citizen, to make it more open to the problems people face and establish a constructive dialogue with them", said the Deputy Secretary General of the Government, State Chancellery, Serghei PALIHOVICI."



United Nations Resident Coordinator, Nicola Harrington-Buhay, discusses with the mayor of Sărata Galbenă on the importance of transparency at the local level

During this period, mayors have presented activity reports and have invited citizens to get to know better budget spending processes. Likewise, local councillors are now more knowledgeable of transparency in decision making after having participated in thematic trainings. The latter have organized field trips in the districts they are responsible for and have discussed with citizens on the opportunities to get involved in the local government's work. In a number of municipalities, citizens have participated in public debates on topics of local interest.

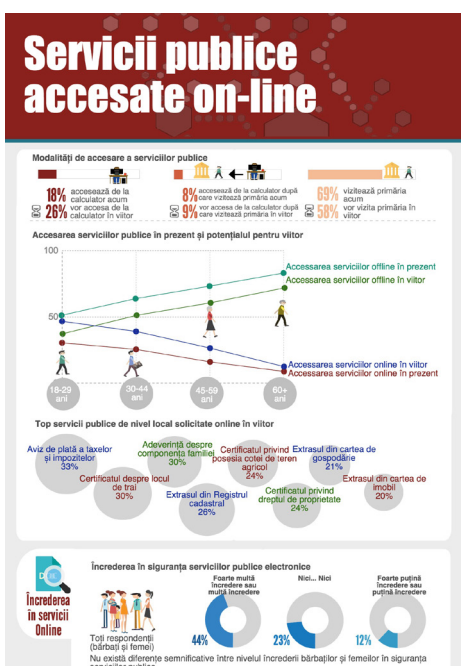
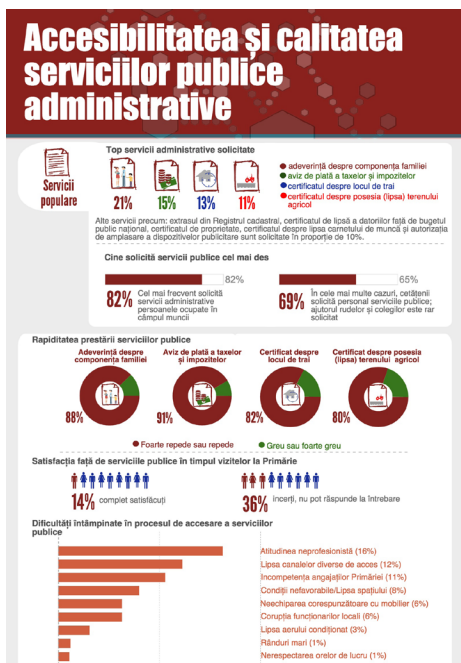


Day Center director, Nina Negru, talks about joint projects carried out with public involvement

## Studies show that citizens do not participate in community management

The study „*Participation of citizens in community management*” has been launched in October, during the Transparency Week. The study presents data on the manner local authorities communicate and inform citizens, as well as on the involvement degree of residents in decision-making or management of the community budget.

According to the aforementioned study, 90 per cent of the Moldovan citizens do not participate in consultation and approval processes of the local budget, whereas 75 per cent do not take part in the meetings of the community residents. Likewise, every other fourth citizen does not know about his or her right to participate in the meetings of the local council.



## Sarata-Galbena – the village that speaks via its local radio station

In Sarata-Galbena commune (Hincesti) was launched the activity of a local radio station.

The local radio station's first broadcast "The village that speaks" had as guests the United Nations Resident Coordinator, Nicola Harrington-Buhay and mayor of Sarata-Galbena village, Mr. Stefan Vlas. The show was broadcasted on October 13, during the launching ceremony of the "Transparency Week".



Sărata Galbenă radio station studio

"People's participation in making decisions concerning their lives and communities is very important for ensuring local democracy. National consultations concerning the future Moldova wants to pursue have showed that people are willing to get involved in the development of their country. I am delighted to participate today in the first edition of "The village that speaks" broadcast at Sarata Galbena's local radio station", said Nicola Harrington-Buhay during the show.

Stefan Vlas, Sarata Galbena mayor, stated that this radio station is a very efficient tool in communicating with the citizens. "Local authorities intend to make full use of this communication tool, which shall allow us to promptly inform the commune's residents about the activities of the Town Hall. In this manner, citizens will learn the news first-hand, without trusting rumours that often times prove to have a negative impact on the effective cooperation between the local authorities and the citizens".

The mayor has mentioned that the radio station intends to broadcast news three days a week, as well as interviews and other rubrics of public interest, via a network of 32 speakers installed on the commune's pillars.

*JILPD Note: Sarata-Galbena commune is situated in the centre of the Republic of Moldova, at a distance of 65 km from the capital, Chisinau. The commune of Sarata-Galbena is made up of five villages: Sarata-Galbena, Bratianovca, Carpinea, Coroliovca and Valea Florii. Its total population is 6100 inhabitants.*



## Local public authorities share experience in being transparent

Several mayors and public officials have participated in study visits to communities in Briceni and Ungheni districts. The officials have visited the Town Hall of Larga commune; local authorities in Lipcani (Briceni district), Sculeni and Ungheni town.

During the first visit, interested parties were able to get acquainted with Larga Town Hall's team work peculiarities, in ensuring transparency in the activity of local authorities.



A delegation of officials and mayors being welcomed at Sculeni town hall (Ungheni)

Radu Urechian, Larga mayor, said that in order to communicate with the citizens, the Town Hall uses its web page, which contains information on the work of the local government. "On the website, citizens can also watch live the meetings of the local council. Our monthly newsletter is published and distributed to the residents of the community, as a mean of communication with citizens without Internet access. Additionally, Larga Town Hall contacts its residents via SMS, operating in this respect a database with 3200 phone numbers".

Deputy Mayor of Lipcani, Larisa Ciornaia, stated that the JILDP support made possible the implementation of a project designed to contribute to development of community relations, local government transparency and community inclusion in decision-making.

Ghenadie Cojocaru, JILDP facilitator, stated that Lipcani municipality is a model of local government. "I would be delighted if in every Town Hall, starting with the mayor and deputy-mayor and ending with specialized clerks, everyone would be as well trained, from a technical point of view, as the staff in Lipcani. When I came here to deliver several trainings, I sensed that the staff of this Town Hall is very knowledgeable. It is quite obvious that Lipcani Town Hall is what a model Town Hall should look like, in terms of management. I don't even want to imagine that starting with the next year, we will still be left with local authorities, which are unable to present information of local interest electronically, on the big screen, to everyone attending public meetings", said the JILDP facilitator.

Interested mayors have participated in a study visit that included touring the Information Centre of Ungheni Town Hall, as well as the Public Relations Bureau of Sculeni commune (Ungheni). Those present were able to learn about the peculiarities the work of such a service entails, from the perspective of facilitating the way local governments relate to their residents.

***JILPD Note: Study visits to five Moldovan municipalities were organized throughout the Transparency Week. These were attended by over 50 mayors and local civil servants.***

## „NOT like that”, say the mayors willing to host the mobile caricatures exhibition

During the Transparency Week, there was launched the first caricatures exhibition, entitled "NOT like that". This presentation was devoted to the most common deviations of local governments, from the rule of law to the way authorities relate to citizens.

The author of the caricatures, Alex Dimitrov, mentioned that this type of art – caricature, is like a scalpel with whose assistance one can try fixing the problems of the creature we call "society". The caricaturist stated that he is pleased to display his critically-tinted works in an exhibition hall where mayors and other local civil servants are present. "This proves that we live in times where freedom of expression is no longer an issue an artist could end up in jail for. On the contrary, he is requested to point out to the problematic issues of society".

In response, Stefan Vlas, mayor of Sarata Galbena commune (Hincesti) has rallied with the caricaturist's position, adding that we are at a stage when the public servant may end up in conflict with law enforcement bodies for the mere failure of performing his or her duties.

The caricaturist's exhibition aims to show citizens, mayors and local councillors attitudes that violate the law and the status of public local authority, but which also go against an active civic spirit.

The purpose of these works is to explain in a simple manner, clear for all citizens, aspects which they don't know about and have no opportunity to learn in terms of local government's work. Therefore, public display of such works is more of a messenger, addressing the population living in rural areas. In other words, the exhibition promotes principles of local autonomy, decentralization, local development and transparency in local decision-making.



Cartoonist Alex Dimitrov explains his chosen art form's role in society to Sărata Galbenă residents

The caricature exhibition is a mobile one. Town Halls from the 30 partner-municipalities of the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme may request the caricature exhibition to display it in their village.

## Transparency week in Razeni

During 13-19 October, in Razeni there were distributed tens of copies of the Citizen's Guide. Local councillors have discussed with several groups of residents on administrative transparency and citizen involvement in local decision-making.



Reopening of the „Elena Alistar” Public Library in Răzeni (Ialoveni) following renovation

In this respect, the Town Hall has organized several activities, such as: open day at the Town Hall and all social institutions, a round table with community groups, on the topic: “Local Budget. Privileges and Opportunities”.

On 17 October, in the last day of the Transparency Week, there were inaugurated the renovated premises of the Public Library “Elena Alistar”. This event was a result of implementation in the village of the National Program Novateca, promoted by the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX Moldova). In Razeni, it was also conducted a survey among citizens, with the purpose to assess their level of satisfaction with the rendered services.

The series of activities concluded with visits of local councillors to community districts, where they have discussed with citizens on the opportunities for the latter's involvement in the local government's work.

## In Rusestii Noi, there were regulated the responsibilities concerning administrative transparency

On 14 October 2014, the Municipal Council Rusestii Noi (Ialoveni) has discussed and approved the Rules on organizing procedures to ensure transparency in resolution drafting and approval and the Action Plan on transparency and citizens' access to information.

It was established that the adopted rules shall be applied in the process of development and approval of draft resolutions with a potential economic, environmental and social impact. Additionally, the announcement of organizing public consultations in these areas shall be made public at least 15 business days before outlining the final version of the draft resolution.



Residents of Rusești (Ialoveni) reading the Citizen's Guide to know their rights

The secretary of the local council was appointed as coordinator of the public consultation process.

Regulations in the field of administrative transparency were carried out in line with the Plan for development of institutional capacities of public authorities in Rusestii Noi commune for 2013-2015, drawn up within the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme.

## In Carpineni, there were discussed the criteria of granting social aid

On 14 October 2014, in Carpineni commune (Hincesti), a workshop for the community residents on the topic “Criteria for granting social aid” was organized.

Beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of social aid: young families, representatives of disadvantaged groups, including the Roma minority, were invited to attend the event.

Organizers claim that such workshops are well-received, as they inform the people on subjects that often times tend to generate suspicions, questions and polemics.

## Transparency events organized in Sarata Galbena

From October 13 to October 19, in Sarata Galbena commune, there were conducted several activities devoted to the Transparency Week. Besides the official national launching of the local radio station and development of the local newsletter, Town Hall employees together with local councillors held a public lecture on: “Social Aid – Steps, Acts, Decisions” and the public debate on “Ways of improving the access road on Yuri Gagarin Street”.



Local councillors explaining local residents the steps, acts and decisions to be taken in order to receive social support



## Plan of Activities, GOTESTI comm. (Cantemir) for the Transparency Week

| Monday  | Tuesday  | Wednesday  | Thursday   | Friday  |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Topic of the Day:</b><br><i>„The right to get involved”</i>  | <b>Topic of the Day:</b><br><i>Accomplishments of the commune in 2014 and challenges for 2015</i>  | <b>Topic of the Day:</b><br><i>Right to social aid</i>   | <b>Topic of the Day:</b><br><i>Access to information</i>   | <b>Topic of the Day:</b><br><i>Administrative transparency</i>  |
| <b>In charge:</b><br><u><b>Bibic Elena,</b></u><br>LCA „Valea Prutului”,<br>leader of “Gotesti Pune Umarul” initiative group  | <b>In charge:</b><br><u><b>Chicov Panainte,</b></u><br>commune mayor   | <b>In charge:</b><br><u><b>Moldovanu Tatiana,</b></u><br>social worker   | <b>In charge:</b><br><u><b>Liuba Tuțu, Bibic Alexandru,</b></u><br>Leaders of community groups   | <b>In charge:</b><br><u><b>Culicovschi Angela,</b></u><br>secretary of the Local Council  |
| <b>Beneficiaries:</b><br><b>40 persons:</b><br><b>20 young people;</b><br><b>5 teachers and educators;</b><br>10 members of community groups;<br>5 persons from Constantinești village.<br><i>Including:</i><br>10 girls, 10 women, 5 Roma, 2 Ukrainians, 2 Russians. | <b>Beneficiaries:</b><br><b>57 persons:</b><br>10 members of community groups;<br>10 teachers and educators;<br>1 social worker;<br>10 pensioners;<br>5 businesses;<br>5 persons from Constantinești village;<br>5 persons with disabilities;<br>5 councillors;<br>6 public servants.<br><i>Including:</i><br>20 women, 5 girls, 3 Roma, 3 Ukrainians, 5 Bulgarians. | <b>Beneficiaries:</b><br><b>45 persons:</b><br>10 persons from vulnerable families;<br>10 persons with disabilities;<br>10 persons from families with many children;<br>5 pensioners;<br>10 persons from disadvantaged families.<br><i>Including:</i><br>15 women, 3 Roma, 4 Bulgarians, 2 Ukrainians. | <b>Beneficiaries:</b><br><b>46 persons:</b><br>10 members of community groups;<br>10 teachers and educators;<br>1 social worker;<br>10 pensioners;<br>5 persons from Constantinești village;<br>10 young people.<br><i>Including:</i><br>15 girls, 2 Roma, 4 Bulgarians, 2 Ukrainians. | <b>Beneficiaries:</b><br><b>52 persons</b><br>10 members of community groups;<br>10 teachers and educators;<br>1 social worker;<br>5 pensioners;<br>5 businesses;<br>5 persons from Constantinești village;<br>5 persons with disabilities;<br>5 leaders of village households;<br>3 councillors;<br>3 public officials.<br><i>Including:</i><br>15 women, 2 Roma, 4 Bulgarians and 2 Ukrainians. |
| <b>Activities:</b><br>1. Round table on the topic „Right or obligation to get involved?”<br>2. Essay contest „If I were the mayor”  | <b>Activities:</b><br><i>Public hearing of the Mayor and Local Council reports /PPT presentation/</i>  | <b>Activities:</b><br>Public lecture on „Right to social aid”  | <b>Activities:</b><br>Launching of the community groups blog – launching meeting   | <b>Activities:</b><br>Meeting with citizens, including community groups to discuss the Internal rules on ensuring administrative transparency   |
| <b>Results:</b><br>40 people know what are the benefits of personal involvement in the activity of commune management   | <b>Results:</b><br>50 people know what are the commune’s successes attained in 2014 and the challenges for 2015.<br>The reports are posted on bulletin boards, including in Constantinești.  | <b>Results:</b><br>35 people know the criteria according to which social aid is granted and what does social aid serve for.  | <b>Results:</b><br>40 persons know what sources of information to consult on the activity of community groups.   | <b>Results:</b><br>50 persons know the ways of getting involved in decision-making and ensuring administrative transparency.<br>Such info is posted on bulletin boards.   |
| <b>Costs:</b><br><b>100 MDL</b>   | <b>Costs:</b><br><b>150 MDL</b>  | <b>Costs:</b><br><b>100 MDL</b>  | <b>Costs:</b><br><b>150 MDL</b>  | <b>Costs:</b><br><b>100 MDL</b>   |

## THE LGSP Project during the Transparency Week

On 15 October 2014, during the Transparency Week, the Local Government Support Project (LGSP) of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) supported **Taraclia** Town Hall in organizing public debates with the municipality’s young people. During the event, youth-related policies in Taraclia were put under review.

Discussions were attended by 37 young activists, local students, representatives of Student Councils, high school Student Council, local NGOs. The mayor and specialized clerks from the Town Hall have participated as observers. In the end, all participants have decided to continue meeting in the same format in order to agree on the specific steps to be undertaken.

Public debates organized during the Transparency Week represent a further step in enhancing transparency and accountability of local government.

On 16 October 2014, also during the Transparency Week, USAID LGSP Project has assisted **Calarasi** Town Hall in organizing a public debate on “The city’s youth policy and youth participation”. Over 50 local young people attended the discussion. During the debate, young people have identified a series of problems, like the quality of street lightening in some neighbourhoods of the city, the need for repairs of sanitary facilities in the city’s schools, the lack of specialized textbooks in the city’s educational institutions, etc. The young people have come up with ideas and proposals, and have decided that the initiative group shall meet in another session to plan further activities. The mayor of Calarasi assured the young people that the Town Hall shall extend its support to the Youth Advisory Board, which follows to be created.

*This series of actions was organized under the aegis of the State Chancellery with the support of the Joint Integrated Local Development Program of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (PNUD) and the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), with the financial support from the Government of Denmark.*

*Don't forget to follow our Facebook and Youtube accounts*

## JILDP target localities (2013-2015)



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