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# LOCAL TRANSPARENCY INDEX

## LTI 2025

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Belgrade, 11 September 2025

# About the Research

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- Transparency Serbia created this tool and first implemented it in 2015.
- In 2025, it was implemented with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and its project partner, the organization Helvetas.
- LTI measures transparency based on pre-set criteria - information are collected from websites, the LSG premises, requests for access to information, obtained from other relevant bodies. They are also obtained from other relevant bodies (Commissioner for Information of Public Importance, Agency for Prevention of Corruption).
- All results are verified in two rounds.
- Scores are based on 95 indicators; the final score (index) can be 0 to 100 points. There are 81 indicators from 8 areas: “Assembly and Council”, “Budget”, “LSG and Citizens”, “Free Access to Information”, “Public Procurement”, “Information Booklet”, “Public Enterprises and Institutions” and “Public Hearings and Competitions”; 14 indicators are in the “Other” category.
- **LTI is the cross-section of the situation at the time of data collection (or verification)**
- **Poor scores in some categories do not necessarily mean corruption is widespread in the related areas. Similarly, good scores by no means guarantee that there is no corruption.** Transparency is just a mechanism for easier detection or prevention of corruption.

# LTI 2025 – Key Findings

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- **The main conclusion is that transparency is stagnating at a relatively low level.** The absolute priority should be the establishment of sustainable mechanisms, primarily through the adoption of regulations that will precisely define procedures and obligations, but, even more importantly, establish accountability for the implementation of these procedures.
- The level of transparency of local self-governments could be significantly improved through the introduction of legal obligations for local self-governments at the national level, provided that the regulations are respected and their implementation is monitored.
- Transparency is positively influenced by the capacities (budget, number of employees) available to municipalities, but political will is a far more important factor.
- The sustainability of transparency, that is, of the results, is also evidenced by the following fact: In this year's survey, more than half of local self-governments (75 out of 145) improved their score, while 64 recorded a lower result. In six cases, the score remained unchanged.
- Fewer local self-governments are achieving continuous multi-year growth or stagnation.

# LTI 2025 – Key Numbers

- **145 LSGs are ranked, 25 city municipalities are rated, but not ranked.**
- The average LTI score same as in LTI 2024: 40 in 2015 and 2019, 46 in 2020, 48 in 2021, 49 in 2022, 52 in 2023, 52 in 2024 and **52 in 2024** (out of the possible 100). The level of transparency remains low.
- **27 od 145 LSGs have** LTI over 60, 15 more than 70, five over 80, and two have LTI higher than 90 (97).

score/year	2015	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
max	74	67	83	90	87	94	97	97
average	40	40	46	48	49	52	52	52
min	11	12	18	21	9	25	9	30

# Top Rated LSGs

Municipality/City	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Novi Pazar	1/97	1/97	1/94	1/87	4/78
Veliko Gradište	2/94	2/88	3/82	7/76	9/71
Kanjiža	3/86	3/87	4/81	5/79	3/83
Tutin	4/82	9/74	8/76	4/81	93/42
Leskovac	5/81	4/83	7/77	8/74	5/75

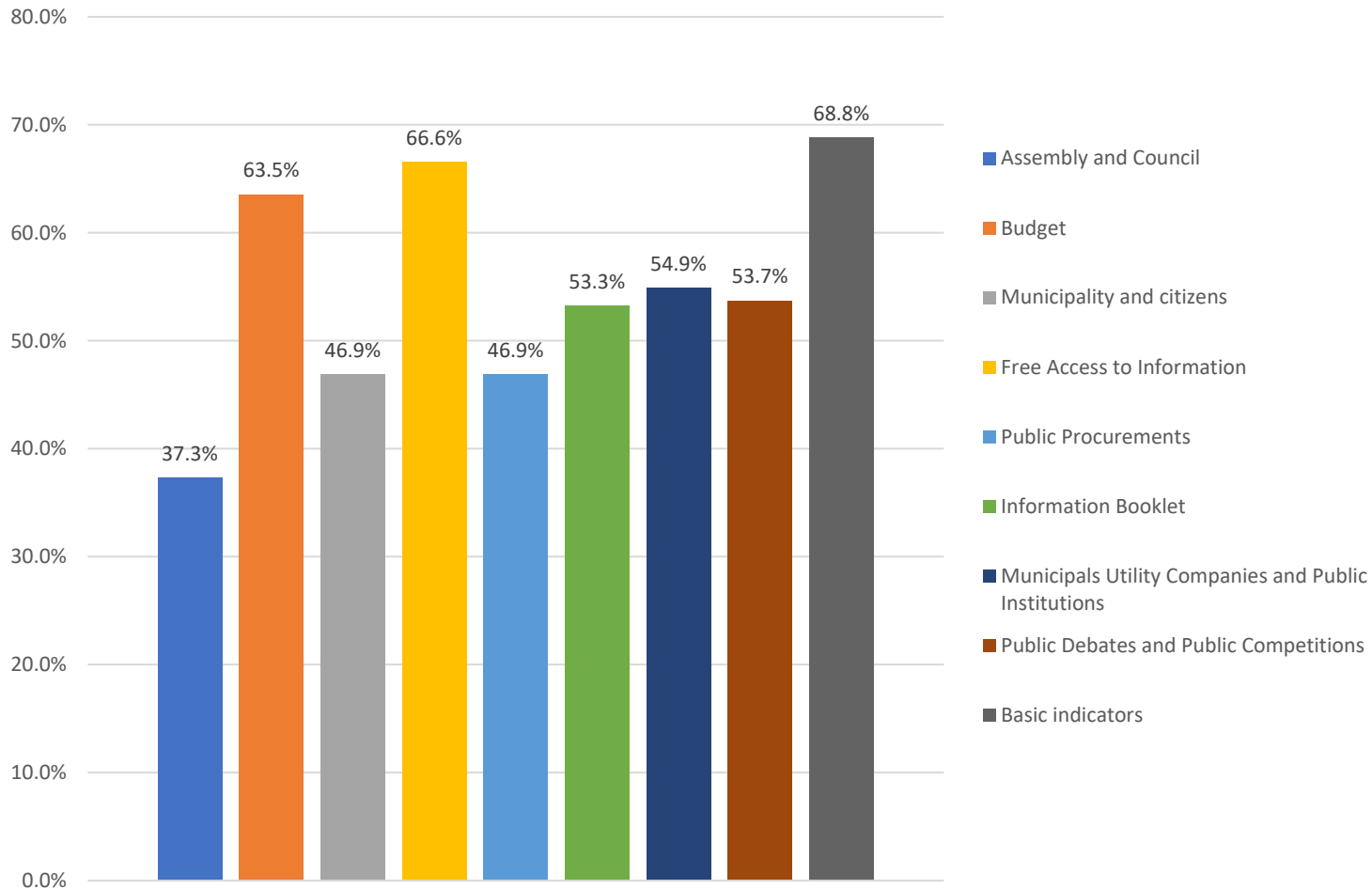
Surčin (77) and Sevojno and Zvezdara (59) have excellent results among the city municipalities.

# Worst Rated LSGs

Municipality/City	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Lučani	140/34	139/31	136/36	134/36	126/37
Sm. Palanka	142/33	111/30	102/46	125/38	118/38
Kovačica	143/33	142/29	143/32	142/35	113/38
Lebane	143/32	119/27	112/45	132/37	129/36
Preševo	145/30	145/9	145/25	145/9	144/21

# Specific results

- **Percentage of successful performance of 145 LSGs per fields**



# Specific Findings - Budget

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- The average score in the “Budget” category, after falling from 63.2% to 59.9%, increased to a record-high 63.5%.
- There are more and more budget portals; some are incomplete, while others are excellent and comprehensive.
- On the other hand, numerous **bad practices are still present:**
  - An insufficient number of published budget documents. The budget itself was not published on the websites of 2.1% (3) LSGs.
  - Semiannual and nine-month budget execution reports were published on the websites of 49.7% of LSGs, and monthly reports on 16.6% (13.8% in 2024).
  - A public debate (in the form positively scored by TS) was organized by 67 LSGs (87 in 2024 and 106 in 2023), and a report was published by 67 LSGs.

# Specific Findings – Decision Making, Use of Property, Competitions

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- Insufficient transparency in the area of “Assembly and Council” significantly affects citizens’ ability to understand what impact the decisions made by these bodies will have on their lives. Some LSGs choose to publish only certain documents, without clear criteria as to why those are published while others are not. The average score in the “Assembly and Executive Board” area (37.3%) is the lowest since almost the very beginning of the LTI research, varying between 34% and 39% over the last five cycles.
- A major problem is the lack of information on the use of municipal property (data on leasing).
- There is still insufficient information about the allocation of funds through public calls (for media, associations), and especially about the implementation of projects for which funds were granted: calls were published on 135 LSG websites, while allocation decisions were published on 107 and 118 respectively, and reports on project implementation on only 9 and 10 websites.

# Specific Findings– Public Procurement, Public Enterprises (PE) and Public Institutions (PI)

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- **Public procurement** – fall continues due to the abolishment of legal obligations.
- Constant but very slow growth in the area of PEs and PIs. The score, however, remains low. A decade after publishing information on PE websites has become mandatory, 12,3% PEs in the sample do not yet have their own websites.

# Specific Findings – Free Access to Information and Case Tracking

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- The average score in this area has dropped drastically – from 73.6% to 53.3%.
- One of the main reasons is the outdated status of administrative information booklets.
- The publication and updating of the “Information Booklet” decreased from 90.3% to 53.8%, mostly due to irregular updating.
- Sixteen (compared to 26 last year) out of 170 LSGs did not respond to the “mystery shopper’s” inquiry.
- Only 10 LSGs provide access to case status through their websites.

# Comparison with LTI 2024

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- Eleven LSGs improved their score by 10 points or more – Preševo (by 21), Kragujevac (by 17), Jagodina (by 16), Beočin, Gadžin Han (by 14), Vladimirci, Rača (by 11), and Novi Kneževac, Valjevo, Niš, Bujanovac (by 10).
- On the other hand, the largest declines were recorded in Čačak (19), Kruševac (13), Petrovac na Mlavi (11), and Bečej, Smederevska Palanka, Negotin, and Žitorađa (by 10 each).

# Women and men in top positions

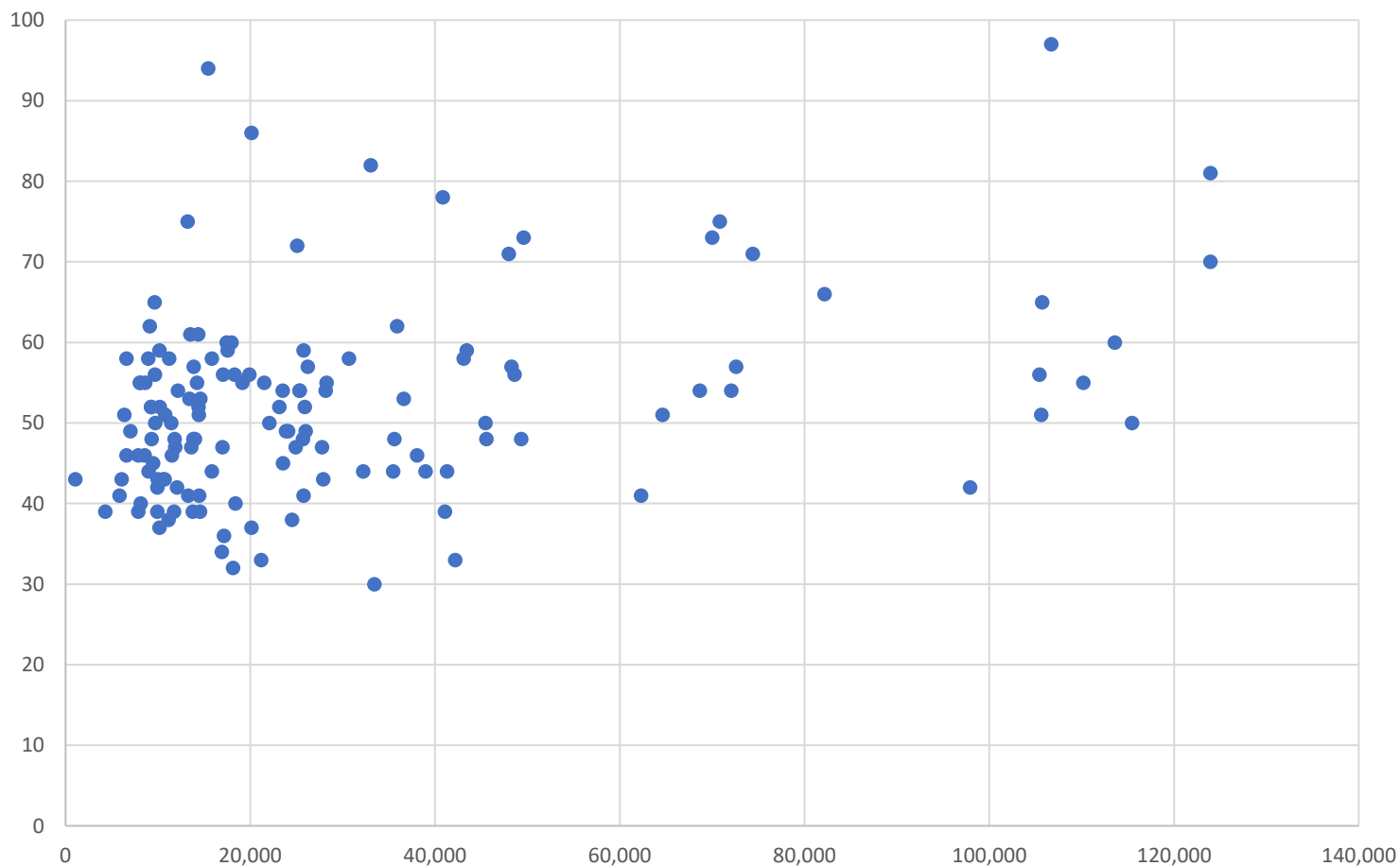
- Data on gender representation in management positions in local self-governments are not directly related to transparency, nor are they part of the evaluation and ranking within the LTI survey.
- Out of 170 cities, municipalities and in-city municipalities, 32 mayors are female, while 138 are men.
- In administration – out of 162 LSGs, 91 women (56%) and 71 (44%) men.

Mayors		
170 JLS	m	f
2025	138	32
2024	138	32
2023	147	23
<b>32 female mayors:</b>		
Cities: 5		
Municipalities: 23		
In-city municipalities: 4		

Heads of administration			
	m	f	No head appointed
2025	71	91	8
2024	75	86	6
2023	77	84	9

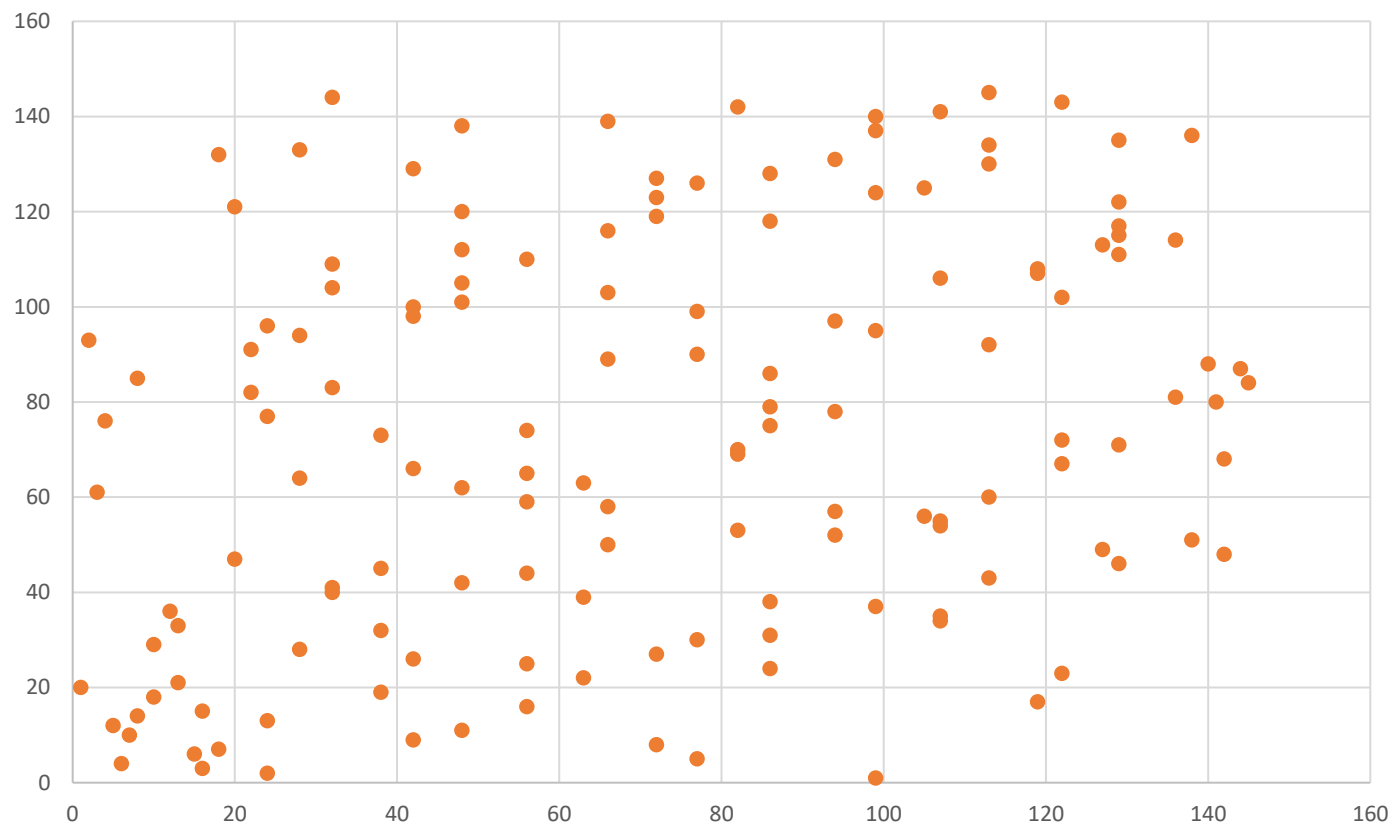
# Larger municipality - greater transparency? Not always

LTI 2025 and number of inhabitants of LSG (without BG, NS, NI, KG)



# How much do cities spend and how transparent are they?

LTI 2025 ranking of LSGs (vertically) and ranking by the size of the budget (horizontally)



# The Most Important Recommendations

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- LSGs should adopt an act that would clearly regulate the scope of information that should be published on the municipal website, deadlines for updating this information, as well as duties and responsibilities within the administration, in order to improve transparency and ensure sustainable progress.
- TS recommends to LSGs to adopt or further develop examples of good practice when creating new websites, while respecting certain prescribed norms. Some of such practices are presented in this report.
- Budget portals significantly contribute to transparency, but in certain LSGs they are neglected - they are not functional or lack data. TS calls on local self-government units to establish as many budget portals as possible, and to regularly maintain them and publish all relevant documents.
- The National Anti-Corruption Strategy, adopted in July 2024, recognizes the problem of insufficient transparency of the work of local self-government units, but the activities have yet to be specified. The TS calls on the Ministry of Justice and the Government to incorporate the key recommendations from this report into the Action Plan for the first year of implementation of the Strategy
- The TS recommends to the Government of Serbia and responsible ministries to promote good practices identified at the local level, both in the preparation of state policies and in the work of national institutions, especially when it comes to budget transparency and public procurements