



PRESS RELEASE

BUDGET TRANSPARENCY IN CROATIAN COUNTIES, CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES: NOVEMBER 2020 - APRIL 2021

Zagreb, 5 July 2021 – For seven years, the Institute of Public Finance has conducted analyses of budget transparency in all Croatian counties, cities and municipalities, and today presented the results of the latest cycle of research that lasted from November 2020 to April this year.

The overall average level of budget transparency in Croatian local government units, expressed as the number of budget documents published on their respective official websites, stands at 4.5 (out of a maximum 5). All counties published all 5 requested documents, cities an average of 4.7 documents, and municipalities an average of 4.4 documents.

An [interactive map](#) of all 576 counties, cities and municipalities has been published on the website of the Institute of Public Finance, where detailed descriptions of the results of this year's [analysis](#) can be found.

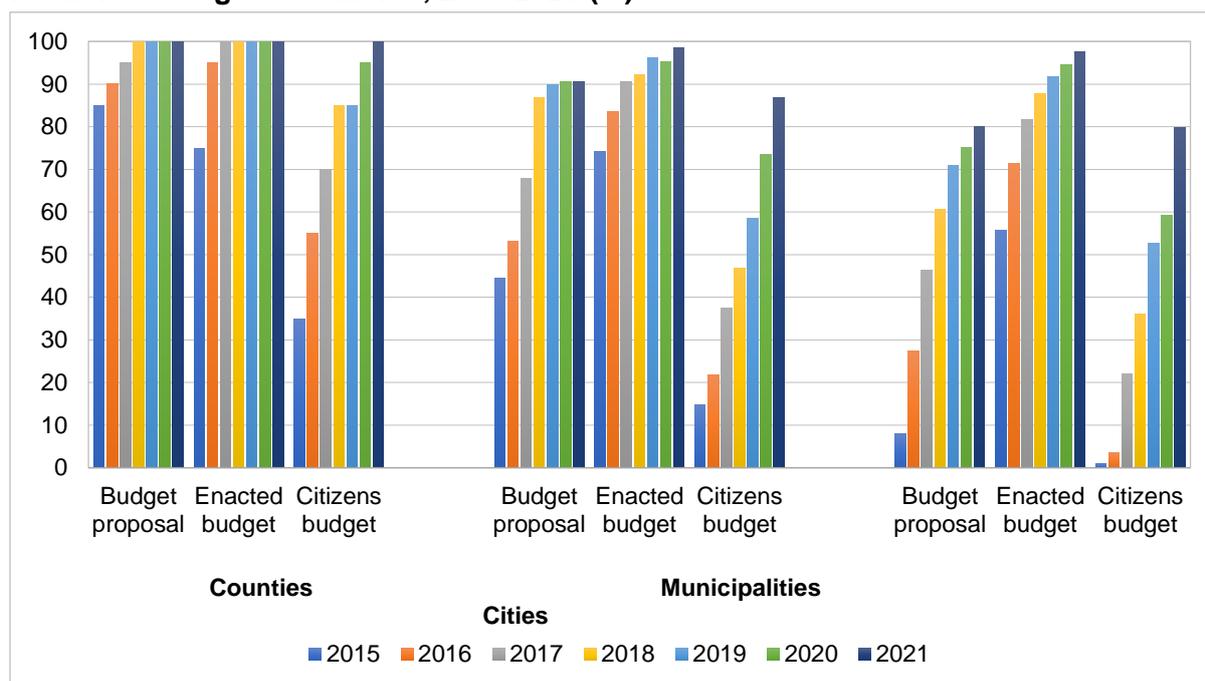
But despite the excellent averages, still 8% (10 cities) and 16% (68 municipalities) do not publish all three documents for which there is a legal obligation to publish, and as much as 20% cities and 31% of municipalities do not publish two documents that the Ministry of Finance recommended to publish.

“The aim of the research was to determine whether all counties, cities and municipalities publish five key budget documents on their websites in a timely manner each year. We are very satisfied seeing that the situation has been improving from year to year. This means that in more and more local government units, citizens, councillors and journalists have the opportunity to be involved in decision-making on local budgets“, said **Mihaela Bronić**, leader of the research within the project „Does Transparency Pay-off? The political and socio-economic impacts of local budget transparency in Croatia“, funded by the Croatian Science Foundation.

Bronić emphasized that the mere publication of five key budget documents – 2019 year-end report, 2020 mid-year report, 2021 budget proposal, 2021 enacted budget, 2021 citizens budget – does not mean that these units are absolutely budgetary transparent or that their leadership is absolutely budgetary responsible, but it is only a confirmation that the laws and recommendations of the Ministry of Finance have been complied with.

“The publication of these five key budget documents can be considered as initial, but a fundamental step towards more complete transparency and citizen participation (i.e. a necessary precondition for educating citizens and their involvement in local budget processes). Only budget-educated and timely informed citizens, councillors and journalists can be constructively involved in decision-making on the collection and spending of local resources and in the control of the responsibilities of local authorities“, said Bronić.

Published budget documents, 2015-2021 (%)



Source: Authors

In seven research cycles, the average budget transparency of all counties, cities and municipalities increased from 1.8 in the first cycle, to 4.5 in the last cycle. Shifts are noticeable in all types of units for all budget documents, and this is best shown by the publication of citizens budgets - in 2015 it was published by only 1% of municipalities, and in 2021 by as many as 80%.

More information about the research results can be found in [Notes of the Institute of Public Finance](#).

Contact person: Mihaela Bronić (E: mihaela.bronic@ijf.hr, ured@ijf.hr or T: 01/4886-444).

INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC FINANCE

The Institute of Public Finance is a public research institute which performs applied and theoretical research in the field of public sector economics. It is an independent and professional institution whose regular associates, consultants and guest experts come from the European Commission, the IMF and the World Bank. Scientists of the Institute are members of numerous commissions, working and advisory bodies of the Government, Parliament and ministries of the Republic of Croatia, as well as active participants in international initiatives and organizations. In addition to the scientific journal [Public Sector Economics](#), the Institute publishes serial publications [Newsletter](#) and [IPF Notes](#) which promote public sector transparency, government accountability and citizen participation, and provide the general public with a better understanding of the public sector economics.