



### ***Portal Service for Citizens' Initiatives, Mayor's Open Days and Info65+***

In the City of Ljubljana, a concern for the healthy and quality life of the citizens, as well as their contentment, is the priority of all the employees of the city administration, public enterprises and institutions, which are (co-)founded by the City. We realise that active participation of the residents in shaping the living conditions has an important influence on their sense of being heard and they themselves contribute to changes in the city. The main purpose of the Office for Citizens' Initiative, (Office) which was established in 2003, is to offer assistance in communicating with citizens and listening to their complaints, which relate to the jurisdiction of the municipality. Since the 2006 elections, when the current Major Mr Zoran Jankovič was first elected, the residents have also had the option of a personal meeting with the Mayor during the Open Day, which takes place at least twice a month at the City Hall. Active since 2008, a **Web Portal Service for Citizens' Initiatives** has been available to the residents to place their suggestions, remarks and ideas. In 2016, the **Informational Point 65+** was opened in order to inform and offer support to senior citizens and people with disabilities. The Office also manages and organizes the Mayor's Open Days, daily receives and coordinates the initiatives of residents and ensures correct and up to date answers of the competent services. Residents may contact the city in person, via telephone, fax, e-mail or regular mail, and web service.

**Web Portal Service for Citizens' Initiatives** has until January 2017 recorded more than 16,900 initiatives (<http://gis1.ljubljana.si/Pobude/PregledOdgovorjenihPobud.aspx>). The application is accessible via the official website of the City of Ljubljana ([www.ljubljana.si](http://www.ljubljana.si)) and is freely accessible to anyone without prior registration. Accurate identification is not required; citizens can therefore maintain their anonymity using a pseudonym. When the Office has received the reply of professional services of the city administration (within 3 days on average, no later than 8 days), the response is published under the initial initiative and is visible to all Service users. The entire archive of initiatives and responses from the date of commencement of the service is also accessible to the public. It is also possible to filter received initiatives and given responses by content or operating area, by city area and by the initiative's time of publication or by entering a keyword. The web service is not intended to be a forum; it serves for receiving specific notifications of potential problems or errors. Therefore it is dominated by actual proposals and comments regarding transport arrangements (parking, abandoned vehicles, damaged traffic signs, speed humps, etc.), landscaping and protection of the environment (abandoned and unmanaged land, environmental pollution, overgrown shrubs), the problem of cycling in the city (random cycle paths, pedestrian zones, endangerment of pedestrians, ..) as well as issues regarding the planned projects in various fields of social life (culture, sports, health, social issues, tourism) and arrangements within the jurisdiction of the municipality (transport, communal investments, landscaping of public spaces, etc.). On **Mayor's Open Days**, the Mayor personally met with 24,000 citizens (2006-2016). In recent years the popularity of the Open Day has risen so much, that it takes place 2 days/month, between 2pm and 8pm. All questions and suggestions of citizens are forwarded to the competent expert services of the municipality and/or the competent public institutions and public companies before the Open Day. So the expert opinion is already available to the mayor during a conversation with a citizen. Those kinds of conversations are extremely effective. After the discussion, the Mayor's opinion is sent back to the competent department, which gives a final assessment of the solution or realization of the citizen's proposal on the basis of mayor's opinion and an expert assessment. The whole process is accompanied by the Office, which also provides the final answer to the citizen.

Discussions between the residents and the Mayor are thematically the reflection of all those topics that are current in our daily lives. Most often issues relate to the organization of municipal infrastructure (sewerage, water supply), the environment, better living conditions, regulation of public spaces. There are proposals amending or supplementing the transport arrangements, solving housing problems, property matters, functional areas and condominium irregularities, favourable places of business/premises lease (associations, institutes) etc. The Information Point 65+ has also been established, as a direct impact of residents' initiatives. We believe that an open, professional and prompt communication between the City and its residents significantly influences on the quality of life and their sense of belonging.