

## GOOD PRACTICE SUMMARY

### Watch out – the budget! / Pazi(n) proračun!

Town of Pazin with a total of 8,638 inhabitants is located in the heart of Istria County. It includes 12 local boards. In the town of Pazin, there are still areas that are not adequately equipped with basic infrastructure. On these problems relate modest city budget funds, and the impossibility of satisfying all the needs of citizens. Consequently, there is a problem of dissatisfaction and frustration due to unfulfilled demands, wishes and needs. Also, the budget which is published is not sufficiently simplified so taxpayers do not understand where their money is going. Therefore it is clearly that it is necessary to educate citizens and insure the possibility of co-decision on what budget funds will be spent. As a logical step in ensuring transparency and solving the problems listed above imposed the inclusion of Pazin in the process of participatory budgeting.

The project "Pazi(n) Proračun!" is implemented in the City of Pazin for three years, starting from 2014. It is developed in cooperation with the National civil society association GONG ([www.gong.hr](http://www.gong.hr)), City of Pazin ([www.pazin.hr](http://www.pazin.hr)) and local civil society association "Društvo Naša Djeca" Pazin ([www.dnd-pazin.hr](http://www.dnd-pazin.hr)) and partners - the Institute for Public Finance ([www.ijf.hr](http://www.ijf.hr)) and the Cities association ([www.udruga-gradova.hr](http://www.udruga-gradova.hr)).

The process flow is almost the same from year to year; in the month of June, commonly, mayor of the City of Pazin and his associates represent a new cycle of the project, invite all citizens to submit their proposals of small communal actions that should, in their opinion be realized in the next year. In July City officials accepted the proposals of citizens, while the processing and analyzing of received proposals, the financial resources needed for the realization and similarly is performed during the month of August. The month of September is reserved for the public hearings which are organized in each of the 12 local boards, leaded by an impartial facilitator. Representatives of the city briefly explain the structure of the city budget, system revenues and expenditures. They present and explain each received proposal (why some of them go out of condition for small communal actions, any other way with which they can be included in the budget and the estimated value of each proposal), after that there is voting for proposals. Citizens of certain local committees decide on a predefined amount. Proposals that receive the most votes, and which are acceptable for realization in the legal, technical and financial terms are incorporated in the draft budget and prepared for the City Council. At public hearings citizens have the opportunity to debate and dialogue with representatives of the City and outside the framework of small communal actions on all matters within the jurisdiction of the City. Before the session of the City Council budget proposal for next year is publicly present with a focus on the results of the project Pazi(n) Proračun!. With this practice citizens have opportunity to familiarize themselves with the structure of the budget for the coming year and give their suggestions and comments. After the adoption of budget on City Council all voted small communal action are prepared for implementation in the next year.

Since the beginning of this project, citizens have submitted a total of 370 municipal actions, public hearings in local boards gathered 548 citizens who voted and decided on the total amount of 1,100,000.00 HRK (147,000.00 €), they chose 80 small communal actions in approximate value given at the disposal.

Other activities in approaching the budget, the budget process and the project Pazin (n) proračun! to citizens are regularly updating the data, information and visualization on the website specially

developed for this project ([www.proracun.pazin.hr](http://www.proracun.pazin.hr)) and publishing of brochures Budget in brief every year.

The project complies with the Strategy of development of town of Pazin in the period 2015-2020, under the strategic objective 5. *Good management*, priority *Improvement of development management*, measures *Straightening capacities to manage development and projects* and *Increased availability of public services* (the short brochure about the Strategy is available [here](#)).

The project is monitored in the way that after each public hearing, project managers come together and analyze the previous discussion. They are comparing the number of gathered citizens, the number of received proposals of communal actions, number of selected actions and the estimated value of the chosen communal actions. They made plan of further steps and possible improvements in the following discussions. When all public hearings are done, preparations for the next year begin with certain modifications that could improve project.

This practice doesn't have specific rules and can be adapted and upgraded in any city that wants to apply this practice. The project can be adapted to other local governments in accordance with their territorial, financial and other characteristics. In our city this type of practice is very effective with small communal actions, but it can also be effective with many other things. It all depends on the cities, citizens and other specific factors.