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Press release

**Consulting citizens in regard to the local services  
- instrument of promoting the public integrity -**

The methodology was elaborated and tested by Transparency International-Romania in the March-October 2007 timeframe within the pilot project „*Promoting the good administration and increasing the citizens’ satisfaction with the public services*” financed by the Trust for Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe. In successfully implementing it contributed the institutional partners: Craiova Town-Hall, The National Administration Institute, The Institute for Marketing and Polls, and the Romanian Chief-towns Association.

Within the project, a sociological study concerning the citizens’ satisfaction with the public services performed by the Craiova Town-Hall was run. Among the main researched aspects were the utilities endowment degree of the houses, the satisfaction degree with the quality of the services and the main issues the citizens encounter, the citizens’ perception over the integrity of the administration and of the authorities’ accountability, as well as the measure in which the citizen are aware and apply their rights and duties.

The research methodology was the object of a public debate with the representatives of the central institutions, in order to verify its replication potential at a national level, based on the real benefits its application brings:

- ***Multiplying and instrument for diminishing the local level corruption*** – diminishing the arbitrary in the usage of the public resources and increasing the transparency being the essential factors in this sense. TI’s studies and analysis in the corruption and poverty fields showed that the informal payments within the public services’ management are subsequently recovered either by increasing the tariffs the consumer pays, or by diminishing these services’ quality.
- ***Promoting the citizen’s right to information and consultation.*** The intercessions within the project responded the needs identified by the research, concerning the encouragement of the dialogue between the local public administration and the citizens, by promoting a balance between the information held on one side, by the local public administration and the public utilities providers, and the citizens on the other side, by making available instruments of information and good practices.

The study’s outcomes were debated within the framework of two public events, both with local public administration’s representatives and with the public services providers and their beneficiaries. The major conclusions of the debates concerned:

- The necessity of completing the new normative frame regarding the public utilities services with a unitary system of evaluating the citizens’ satisfaction with the public services’ quality

- The necessity of constantly utilizing this type of instruments in order to detect the evolution of the citizen's satisfaction with the manner in which the local administration understands to carry forward their requests, offering thus the possibility of a permanent consultation of the community
- The necessity of particularizing the poll for each category of locality – chief town, town, and village – and for their under-divisions, so that the studies' results show a real image of the existent/present situation

Also, starting from the needs identified within the study, the first instrument of information from the country was elaborated, on this project basis – The public services' guide from the Craiova chief town, regarding the manner these are organized and are functioning, as well as the rights and obligations they have to the local public administration and to the services providers. The guide was made available for all the interested citizens, free of charge.

Following the obtained outcomes and the positive impact at the local community level, the methodology is to be replicated in the next period at a national level, as an instrument for promoting the transparency and for diminishing the corruption and the arbitrary within the decisions regarding the public utilities services. On the basis of the community's needs it is recommended to carry on impact studies concerning the investments, prioritizing based on the real needs of the community also at the tariff setting.