

# **Social Sustainability & Citizen Engagement**

## **Urban Partnership Program II**

### **Kolasin**

#### **City Synthesis Report**

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# Kolasin

## City Synthesis Report

This Social Sustainability and Citizen Engagement Assessment was carried out by MANS – Network for the Affirmation of the NGO Sector in Montenegro (<http://www.mans.co.me/>), Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development ([www.co-plan.org](http://www.co-plan.org)), and the Institute for International Urban Development ([www.i2ud.org](http://www.i2ud.org)), as part of the World Bank - Austria Partnership Program for Strengthening Local Governments in South-Eastern-Europe countries. This assessment constitutes the second phase of the Urban Partnership Program (UPP II). For more information, please refer to the SEE Cities: Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Cities Website (<http://www.seecities.eu/>). The analysis, results, and views expressed in this paper are those of the authors alone and do not represent the position of the World Bank Group or any of its member countries.

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# Kolasin

## City Synthesis Report

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## Introduction

As part of the World Bank Group-Austria Partnership Program for Strengthening Local Governments in South-Eastern-Europe, the World Bank Social Development Unit has developed a Social Sustainability and Citizen Engagement (SSCE) Initiative, which continues and expands on the successful approach of the social sustainability assessments undertaken in phase I of the Urban Partnership Program. These assessments addressed two dimensions of socially sustainable and inclusive urban development:

- *Social Accountability and Participation* to increase accountability in the delivery of services and programs and empower urban marginalized and vulnerable groups to participate in their cities' development; and
- Proactively addressing the challenges of *Marginalization* to identify the needs of socially excluded groups and associated inequalities.

The initiative aimed to increase knowledge and awareness about citizen engagement (CE) mechanisms among stakeholders, including vulnerable groups. The first phase of the project involved five pilot cities in four countries in South Eastern Europe (SEE): Banja Luka (BiH), Durres (Albania), Pristina (Kosovo), Sarajevo (BiH) and Skopje (FYR of Macedonia). The SSCE Initiative in UPP II builds upon the lessons and best practices that emerged during the first phase of the UPP, enhances the focus on the Citizen Engagement (CE) component, and expands its scope to include seven countries, and nine cities in this second cohort.

Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development in Tirana and the Institute for International Urban Development (I2UD) in Cambridge, Massachusetts have assembled a team of local experts to carry out research and fieldwork in this second phase in the following cities: Elbasan (Albania), Gjilan (Kosovo), Kumanovo (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Tuzla (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Karlovac (Croatia), Ulcinj and Kolasin (Montenegro), Pancevo and Sabac (Serbia).

Phase 1 of this project resulted in detailed, analytical reports of each of the nine cities covering demographic, social, physical, economic, cultural, institutional and political issues. The results of this research are summarized in **Section 1 – City Profile**. The full reports are available upon request. During this initial stage, the city teams also identified vulnerable groups to be the focus of the second phase of the assessment. This selection was made on the basis of official information obtained from institutions responsible for the provision of various public services at a local level, findings from research studies made by international and national organizations, as well as other relevant documents (laws, provisions, local development strategies, etc.) and representatives from marginalized and vulnerable communities and NGOS consulted during the inception phase.

Phase 2 involved extensive fieldwork and consultation with community members and other stakeholders. Each city team carried out a multiple Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and In-Depth Interviews (IDIs). The FGDs were held with each vulnerable group, often with men and women separated for part of the discussion. The teams also conducted FGDs with NGO representatives. The questionnaires used to conduct these discussions are available upon request. Focus group participants were recruited through a public call advertised via mailing lists and social networks and in cooperation with local grassroots NGOs that work with the identified vulnerable communities. In-Depth Interviews were carried out with at least two representatives

of three of the following groups of stakeholders: local government representatives, the business sector, and the NGO sector. Local Government Associations were also consulted and interviewed in the process.

**Section 2** provides a summary overview of the issues raised during the FGDs and IDIs. The summary is organized according to the three themes covered during the FGDs:

- Existing levels of social accountability and citizen engagement;
- Opportunities and constraints for social accountability and citizen engagement;
- Social inclusion vis-à-vis public service provision.

For Phase 3, a Participatory Scenario Development (PSD) Workshop was held in Kolasin on November 1, 2016. The objectives of the PSD workshop were to:

- Raise awareness of the results of the previous two phases;
- Provide recommendations for the local government authorities, the wider civil society and intermediaries, i.e. NGOs, CBOs; and
- Map out solutions to reinforce socially sustainable city development and integrity in public services.

The workshop brought together stakeholders from multiple sectors and engaged them in identifying locally relevant pathways of autonomous and planned *change (improvements)* in the context of social accountability, sustainability and good governance.

The participants were encouraged to envision a future scenario for the introduction of various social accountability and social inclusion mechanisms. As a result, stakeholders developed a “sense of ownership” for the scenarios. Particular focus was placed on the use of ICT tools for drafting socially inclusive initiatives. **Section 3** builds on the scenarios agreed on by the workshop participants, as well as their recommended detailed actions for implementation, and suggests three key interventions to set the City of Kolasin on a path towards greater accountability and citizen engagement.

Two Annexes are included in this City Report. Annex 1 presents the concept and application of the SSCE Index. Despite efforts to harmonize the Index application and disaggregate data among different respondents, each city collected data differently, resulting in findings that are not able to be read comparatively across cities. Findings nonetheless offer an evidence base for decision makers in each city analyzed. Annex 2 provides a representation of the questions that constitute the questionnaire distributed in the participating cities. Different colors represent different pillars or categories both horizontally and vertically. Horizontal scores represent the different aspects of Citizen Engagement (CE) including willingness and capacity on the demand side, willingness and capacity on the supply side, and feedback and monitoring. Read horizontally, the matrix gives a Citizen Engagement “pulse” on different sectors that correlate to other components of the Urban Partnership Program.

# 1. City Profile

## 1.1. General City Profile<sup>1</sup>



The Municipality of Kolasin is located in a northern part of Montenegro and was founded in 17<sup>th</sup> century. It covers the area of 897 km<sup>2</sup> and it is situated at 954m above sea level. It is well recognized as one of the centers of Montenegro's winter tourism. This municipality is accessible by two-lane road and railway. It is surrounded by the Bjelasica and Sinjajevina mountains.

This municipality has its own Statute, which stipulates Kolasin's coat of arms and municipal holiday, celebrated on August 28th.

Kolasin consists of 23 local communities: Kraljske Bare, Recine, Lipovska Bistrica, Lipovo, Matesevo, Kolasin, Prekobrdje, Lijesnje, Medjurijecje, Smailagica Polje, Crkvine, Velje Duboko, Drijenak, Moračko Trebaljevo, Manastir Morača, Gornja Morača, Rovačko Trebaljevo, Babljak, Bakovici, Vranjestica, Sela and Mrtvo Duboko.

According to the Statistical Office of Montenegro (Monstat) and results from the last *Census of population, households and dwellings in Montenegro* conducted in 2011, the total population of Kolasin is 8,380, with a density of 9.3 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, constituting 1.4% of the population of Montenegro.<sup>2</sup> The number of citizens in Kolasin has significantly decreased in the last four decades by up to 40%. Depopulation is primarily a result of the ongoing migration of the population from inaccessible and poorly connected villages of Kolasin. The poor economic situation in the municipality of Kolasin has forced many to look for jobs in other municipalities that offer better living conditions.

2,725 inhabitants (32.5%) live in the urban part of the municipality, while the majority of all inhabitants, i.e. 5,655 live outside urban areas (67.5%). The population in Kolasin is quite heterogeneous. According to the last census, the majority of citizens are Montenegrin nationals (4,812), followed by Serbs (2,996). The 2011 census shows that there are more male than female inhabitants in Kolasin, while at the same time, women are slightly older than men. In the age structure of the Municipality of Kolasin, the most represented population is the middle aged (between 20 and 60 years). The last available data from 2014 show that there are 1,276 employees in Kolasin. In 2015, there were 854 unemployed citizens in Kolasin.

Until the local elections in Kolasin, which were held on May 25, 2014, the ruling structures were comprised of Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) and the Group of citizens. Elections brought

<sup>1</sup> Data provided in this report represent the official data given by the Municipality of Kolasin, Statistical Office of Montenegro, Employment Agency of Montenegro and other relevant institutions in their reports, yearbooks and other relevant documents. In some aspects of given data, MANS noticed that some data differ among institutions due to a different methodologies in preparation of such data.

<sup>2</sup> Statistical Office of Montenegro, Statistical yearbook, Podgorica, 2015. More information is available on the website of the Statistical Office of Montenegro: <http://www.monstat.org/cg/page.php?id=322&pageid=322> (last visited 21 February 2016).

significant changes in the political life of the municipality. First of all, results of local elections were under a serious test, having in mind that election in repeated and that the official results of election came finally after three months. The governing DPS and the Group of citizens became the opposition, while the previous opposition parties have become the governing ones.

Out of 6,824 voters, a right to vote had been used by 5,396 voters. The highest number of votes was won by the DPS (1,773), which was followed by the Democratic Front (1,345) and SNP (1,155). Coalition between the SDP and Positive Montenegro won 489 votes, which was less than Group of citizens who won votes. Nevertheless, the negotiations after the elections showed disagreements between coalition parties at the national level – DPS and SDP. Without the SDP, it was impossible either for DPS and Group of citizens or Democratic Front and SNP to form a local government. DPS has won 10 out of 31 mandates, but the Democratic Front and SNP won eight and seven mandates, while the Group of citizens and SDP won three mandates each.

Going through a long process of negotiations, especially having in mind that the DPS and SDP form a government at the national level, it was quite surprising that SDP decided to form a coalition with the opposition parties. Thus, the current governing structure is comprised of Democratic Front, Socialist Peoples' Party and Social Democratic Party – Positive Montenegro.

The municipality's governing structure immediately faced very serious problems in its activities and work, having in mind that they have inherited serious debt from the previous local government and is still dealing with this issue, almost two years later.

New governing structures found this municipality in serious economic issues. In 2014, the public debt of this municipality was over EUR 7 million and only increased over the next several months. At one point, the president of Municipality of Kolasin, Ms. Zeljka Vuksanovic claimed that the municipality was over EUR 10 million in debt. In addition to these economic troubles, the bank account of this municipality was blocked for five years. This account was unblocked at the end of 2015, after this municipality received a loan from a bank. This enabled Kolasin to pay off some of its debt, but not all of it, which still causes serious concerns and challenges for the municipality's administration.

The economic situation in the Municipality of Kolasin is still not satisfactory. The last data given by the Employment Agency and the Statistical Office of Montenegro show that the number of unemployed people is increasing. Mainly, Kolasin's economy depends on tourism, especially during the winter season. However, this is still far from enabling citizens of Kolasin to have a good quality of life. The main engines of economic growth in Kolasin during the 1990s were large, social enterprises such as the 'Ski Centar Bjelasica' (ski center), 'Veletrgovina' (trade company), 'Transport' (transportation company), 'Impregnacija drveta' (wood company), 'Exportdrvo' (wood ccompany) and 'FAK' (company for aluminum-steel cables), which employed several thousand workers. However, these enterprises declined with the economic transition and unsuccessful privatization process.

## **1.2. Vulnerable Groups and Exclusion**

The Municipality of Kolasin has developed a Local Plan of Social Inclusion and Program of Social Housing, which are used as mechanisms for the inclusion of vulnerable groups. However, there are no mechanisms for citizens that can be used for either communication or participation in municipal development projects.

In addition, there is currently no political party in a Local Assembly that represents only marginalised groups. In their speeches and activities, each of political parties tend to represent majority of citizens of municipality. Moreover, there are no NGOs that deal with the protection of rights of these groups in a targeted way. When it comes to protection of vulnerable groups, there are several NGOs, such as the Association of Disabled Workers – Kolasin and the Association of Parents of Children and Youth with Disabilities 'Zvijezda', which protects children with disabilities.

According to Monstat, in 2011 there were 1,216 persons with difficulties in performing daily activities, which is 14.5% of the total population. This percentage is even higher than the national average (11%). During the census, there was an option for respondents to state more than one difficulty during implementation of his/her activities. By “type of difficulty”, Kolasin counted:

- 701 persons (8.4%) that have difficulty with movement,
- 160 persons (1.9%) that have hearing difficulties,
- 293 persons (3.5%) that have vision difficulties,
- 109 persons (1.3%) that have difficulty with memory, concentration and communication,; and
- 378 persons (2.3%) with other difficulties.

A significant number of people in Kolasin exercise their right to social assistance. During 2013, there were 290 families who were receiving aid for material security. Other types of assistance were mainly targeted at individuals.

### **1.3. Social Accountability and the use of ICT**

The Municipality of Kolasin uses ICT tools for communication with the public and potential investors. For that purpose, they have developed an official web site of the municipality, which is located at: [www.kolasin.me](http://www.kolasin.me).

The web presentation of the municipality includes the latest information about the activities and events in the Municipality of Kolasin. The portal, besides the home page, contains other categories, such as: Information about the Mayor, the Municipal Assembly, and the local authority; services for citizens; information about the municipality; news and contacts; open city, etc. The portal also includes banners that lead to: a bulletin board, issuance of a building permit, a guide to free access to information, public procurement notices, possibility to report corruption, links to the Municipal Election Commission and Office for Drug Prevention, and other relevant information. Information offered by the municipality on its official website is regularly updated.

From the abovementioned, it can be concluded that according to practice, the municipality is at level 2 of the standards of the European Union. (Level 2: website of the city/municipality, besides information, contains forms that are a precondition for citizens to obtain a service from the city/municipality (standardized forms which must be completed)). These forms can be downloaded directly from the website of the municipality and citizens can fill them out at home, thereby reducing the time spent in the municipal center).

One of the good practices of the municipality is that it offers contacts to key people in the municipality, including their mobile phone numbers. In this way, employees of the municipality make themselves more easily and personally available to citizens.

However, in the section 'Service for Citizens', there is an accessible form through which citizens may submit inquiries to the municipality, as well as report problems that they might have. So far, there are not too many people that were willing to submit their questions and inquiries to the municipality, which can be seen from the official website of the municipality. The last response published on the website is from December 2014. The website of the municipality does not have a blog possibility or any other form of e-communication where citizens would submit their requests and questions or just give their opinions about the work of local government. Besides this, the municipality does not have its own official Facebook or Twitter account, thus there are only some individual cases of citizens commenting on the work of the municipality.

One of the main problems in Municipality of Kolasin, however, is that the majority of citizens are not computer literate. Information from the 2011 Census show that 4,157 residents are not computer literate (59%), compared to 26% who are literate, and 14% who are partially literate.

#### **1.4. Local governance vis-à-vis accountability and engagement**

The current legislative framework, policies and other frameworks that define citizens' participation in decision making processes and governance consists of the Statute of the Municipality of Kolasin and the Decision on Participation of Local Population in Public Affairs.<sup>3</sup> The Decision stipulates that the authority is obliged to provide a possibility for citizens' involvement in decision making processes about acts of common interest in the form of information and consultation or through submission of complaints, suggestions and recommendations.<sup>4</sup> Among the subjects that can participate in public affairs are citizens, legal entities, bodies, administrative bodies and services of the Capitol City and municipality, local communities, state bodies, NGOs, associations, professional chambers and associations, the Council for development and protection of local governance, and other subjects.<sup>5</sup>

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Local Parliament of Kolasin, NGOs can participate in the work of the local parliament and its working bodies, but without a right to vote ('free chair').<sup>6</sup> In relation to the proposed agenda of the session, NGOs may submit proposals and opinions no later than three days before the session of the Assembly. Suggestions and opinions are submitted to the President of the Assembly, the President of the Municipality, other authorized proposers and the competent working body.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the president of the Assembly organises a working meeting with representatives of NGOs at least twice a year in order to improve cooperation between the two.<sup>8</sup> Participation of NGOs is mainly done through a public call for their involvement in the work of the Assembly.

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<sup>3</sup> Decision on Participation of Local Population in Public Affairs, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 37/11 and 30/12.

<sup>4</sup> Decision on Participation of Local Population in Public Affairs, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 37/11 and 30/12, article 4.

<sup>5</sup> Decision on Participation of Local Population in Public Affairs, Official Gazette of Montenegro no. 37/11 and 30/12, article 17.

<sup>6</sup> Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Municipality of Kolasin, Official Gazette of Montenegro - Municipal Regulations, No. 13/11, article 154.

<sup>7</sup> Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Municipality of Kolasin, Official Gazette of Montenegro - Municipal Regulations, No. 13/11, article 155.

<sup>8</sup> Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Municipality of Kolasin, Official Gazette of Montenegro - Municipal Regulations, No. 13/11, article 156.

Citizens can directly participate in decision-making on local affairs of common interest. This is being done through several mechanisms: submission of initiatives<sup>9</sup>, submission of citizen initiatives<sup>10</sup> or by filing a petition, proposal, or citizen complaint.<sup>11</sup>

With the aim of promoting an open and democratic society, local authorities are mandated to cooperate with NGOs. In order to achieve this, authorities shall ensure that drafts and proposals of general acts, plans and programs, as well as reports on the work of authorities and public services are available to NGOs via internet presentation or presentation of content.<sup>12</sup>

In addition, cooperation with the NGOs will be made through meetings with the president of Assembly with NGOs. However, unlike the Rules of Procedure, the Statute stipulates that these meetings will be held at least on an annual basis.

The level of citizens' participation in activities of municipality is, in general, very low. Although municipal bodies are open to the public, the level of public interest in the activities of municipalities are at a very low level. There are no marginalised ethnic groups, such as Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in Kolasin, though children and youth with special needs and disabilities; persons with disabilities; children and youth at risk of conflict with the law; and elderly who need appropriate forms of social protection constitute the municipalities main vulnerable groups.

## **1.5. Accessibility to Public Services**

There are no universities in the Municipality of Kolasin, which forces students from this municipality to seek higher education in other municipalities. At the end of the 2013/2014 school year, there were 15 regular primary schools and one regular secondary school. For the same period, there were 737 pupils in primary schools and 329 students in the secondary school.<sup>13</sup>

In 2013 there were 39 health workers and associates who provided medical help to the citizens of Kolasin. Out of these 39 people, there were four general practitioners and four specialists. It is very interesting that among health workers, there were no dentists, and only one pharmacist. In the municipality of Kolasin there is a Health Center, an emergency center and three regional clinics (in the Monastery Moraca, Dragovića Polje and Kraljske Bare). However, the lack of health personnel (especially medical) and outdated and inadequate medical and dental equipment greatly affect the poor quality of health care. Contrary to the official statistics, there are nine doctors, seven dentists, one pharmacist and 45 health workers with secondary education currently in Kolasin.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, the Municipality of Kolasin does not have many children's daycare facilities. There is one kindergarten 'Sestre Radovic', where there is a possibility for parents to leave their children during day.

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<sup>9</sup> Statute of Municipality of Kolasin, Official Gazette of Montenegro - Municipal Regulations, No. 25/04, 31/04, 24/06, 41/10 and 31/11, article 85.

<sup>10</sup> Statute of Municipality of Kolasin, Official Gazette of Montenegro - Municipal Regulations, No. 25/04, 31/04, 24/06, 41/10 and 31/11, article 86.

<sup>11</sup> Statute of Municipality of Kolasin, Official Gazette of Montenegro - Municipal Regulations, No. 25/04, 31/04, 24/06, 41/10 and 31/11, article 105.

<sup>12</sup> Statute of Municipality of Kolasin, Official Gazette of Montenegro - Municipal Regulations, No. 25/04, 31/04, 24/06, 41/10 and 31/11, article 111.

<sup>13</sup> Statistical Office of Montenegro, Statistical Yearbook 2015, Podgorica.

<sup>14</sup> Strategic Plan of Development of Municipality of Kolasin 2012-2016.

The municipal service sector in general in Kolasin, especially when it comes to infrastructure, needs to be further improved. Data from the last census show that there are 1,836 dwellings in Kolasin that are connected to a public water supply system. This is a majority of dwellings in the Municipality of Kolasin. On the other hand, the ones that are not connected to a public water supply system are connected to a hydrophor or similar plumbing. When it comes to the availability of the sewerage system, 421 dwellings are connected to a public sewerage system and 2,177 dwellings are connected to a septic tank.

According to the same data, 3,404 dwellings are covered by an electrical system in Montenegro

Only one third of the urban settlement is covered by a sewerage system that serves only 12% of residential area, is 3,215m long, and has a diameter of 200-600mm. The majority of the population is not connected to the sewerage network, thus being forced to use unsanitary septic tanks, which are very rarely emptied once a year. The question of the collector and the lagoon has not been solved. Existing locations for disposal of wastewater and sewerage sludge are located near Breza, which is densely populated and located on the right bank of the river Tara. There is, therefore a serious risk of contamination.

During the last decade, the urban area of the Municipality of Kolasin has become a community that follows trends in the development of information and communication technologies. Namely, in the central city area there is a large percentage of households owning a computer and having an internet connection. As for rural areas, access to internet and communication technologies is much more limited. First of all, infrastructure for telephone companies that offer better access to internet and other communication technologies in rural areas is at a very low level.

Solid waste collection in the Municipality of Kolasin has been entrusted to the Public Utility Company of Kolasin, founded by the Municipality of Kolasin. The Strategic Masterplan and the Law on Waste Management of Montenegro define the principle of regional waste management. There is still an ongoing process of defining the location of a regional landfill that will serve the territory of seven municipalities in northern Montenegro: Kolasin, Mojkovac, Bijelo Polje, Berane, Andrijevica, Plav and Rozaje. The Municipality of Kolasin has planned, however, for construction of a transfer station and recycling center near the industrial zone Bakovići.

A particular problem at the municipal and national level is the inadequate disposal of waste in places that are not meant for those purposes, thus creating 'wild dumps'. The most common places for the formation of such 'landfills' are waterbeds, which are specifically noticeable in rural areas. Solid waste is usually disposed of in torrential watercourses and during the raining seasons, the waste ends up in riverbeds of Tara and Moraca.

The Municipality of Kolasin has 287.7 km of local roads and about 240 km of unclassified roads; a total of 68.7 km of roads have been paved. Besides the roads, there are 11 bridges in the whole territory of Municipality of Kolasin. This municipality is intersected by two significant roads – the Adriatic Highway and the Belgrade-Bar railroad, lending to very favorable connections with neighboring municipalities, as well as with the central and southern part of Montenegro and with Serbia.

Regional roads play an important role for the municipality, particularly the Mioska-Boan road over Semolj to the Municipality of Savnik and Durmitor region and the Kolasin-Jezerine-Raskrsnica-Berane road. Streets in the city center are not well constructed, which is why there are many roads that should be reconstructed. Besides this, the Municipality of Kolasin has a

dispersed settlement structure, making villages quite distant from the city center. There are a large number of local roads that are in a poor condition. In the suburbs, due to a poor quality of asphalt mixture, there are asphalt ruptures in many locations.

In addition, one of the biggest threats to the rural roads is floods during rainy seasons, especially in the winter, which wash away embankments and related pathways, forcing the Municipality to invest significant funds in their restructure and rehabilitation.

There is no public transport in the Municipality of Kolasin. The majority of citizens have a personal car or travel using local taxi companies. Due to the size of the municipality, there is no real necessity for creating public transportation. However, when it comes to a connection with other cities, there are buses that regularly travel through Kolasin.

## **2. Summary of Focus Group Discussions and In-Depth Interviews**

In order to confirm and explain the initial findings and numerous problems identified in municipality of Kolasin through the Analytical Report, six Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with representatives of various groups, including the NGO sector, persons with disabilities, unemployed people, low and middle-income people and youth. The FGDs provided clearer insight into problems and obstacles that citizens are facing on a daily basis. Furthermore, six in-depth interviews were conducted with representatives of local government and their relevant bodies, NGOs and business representatives. The City Team faced serious challenges in organizing interviews with business sector representatives, considering that none of the business representatives wanted to participate in interviews due to a fear of causing any conflict or misunderstanding with people from the municipality. However, after several days of delaying interviews, the City Team did manage to get interviews from two representatives small business enterprises.

In total, 52 participants (27 men and 23 women), took part in the FGD activities. Participants were invited based on their age, gender, employment status, income and education level. It was preferred that FGD participants not know each other that well, but in some FGDs this was impossible, especially when it comes to NGO representatives and persons with disabilities. Furthermore, since Kolasin is pretty small municipality, unfortunately FGDs could not gather people that were complete strangers to each other. Each focus group explicitly stated that they do not want to be video-recorded or photographed. Focus groups were conducted with NGO representatives, unemployed persons, middle-income employed persons, low-income employed persons, persons with disabilities, and youth.

Although the FGDs were planned to last approximately two hours, each of them lasted less than two hours. However, the work was structured in four parts: 1) introduction, where the facilitator of the FGDs explained the purpose of the focus group; 2) warm-up questions and discussion; 3) whole group discussion; and 4) closing. Men and women were not separated for the focus groups, since participants asked to have a whole group discussion.

### **2.1. Existing Social Accountability Levels**

#### **2.1.1. *Views on the current state of local affairs***

FGDs provided the City Team with several very interesting answers that helped to identify the main accountability and engagement challenges in the Municipality of Kolasin. Although many of these problems were noted in the development of the general profile of Municipality of Kolasin (Analytical Report), some new problems arose from discussions. For example, the youth of the Municipality of Kolasin believe that no one takes them seriously (including the Municipality), nor are institutions addressing their problems in an organized and systematic way. Bad economic situations, parents' struggle for a minimum standard of living, the lack of serious programs for the prevention of alcoholism and drug addiction, and a lack of programs for the employment and self-employment of young people leave them to take care of themselves.

The general opinion of FGD participants is that the Municipality of Kolasin is still not transparent and accountable enough. However, this opinion varied from one group to another, ranging from opinions that the Municipality is “not transparent and accountable at all” to opinions that “it is transparent and accountable to some extent.” Nevertheless, according to our

respondents, the situation has started to improve since the last local elections and the election of the new Mayor of Kolasin. According to FGD participants, most information is acquired through friends, relatives and other personal connections, while only a small amount is obtained through the internet and social networks. Furthermore, participants consider that the Municipality is more transparent at the lower levels, whereas at higher institutional levels, it is increasingly closed.

Thus, participants of one of the FGDs were not informed about the possibility to meet with the Mayor of Kolasin and discuss certain issues, including their complaints about the work of the Municipality and its services.

**“...I did not know that the Mayor meets citizens on Thursdays and reviews their complaints until now.”**

*Quote from the low-income FGD*

One of the biggest challenges is the transparency and accountability of the Municipality towards persons with disabilities (including children), who claim to have enormous problems with regards to access to the Municipality. They strongly believe that it

is necessary to start implementing legislation and plans adopted at both the central and local levels. The Municipality’s approach needs to be changed to solve these issues and not, as in the previous administration, for the implementation of changes to stop at the verbal commitments of individuals to improve the situation. Participants in some FGDs think that the fact that the situation has slightly improved is a credit to the Mayor of the Municipality and unfortunately still not a systemic phenomenon.

When it comes to access to services, citizens generally have access, though they are still not well informed about their rights and possibilities. The majority of FGD participants stated that they think services and access to services need to be significantly enhanced. None of the respondents mentioned that he/she submitted a complaint to the municipality, though they are aware that the system for complaints to the municipality is underdeveloped. When it comes to access to services by people with disabilities, they do not have even minimum of conditions for this, considering that most buildings do not have ramps for people with physical disabilities, which is why they are not accessible to this group.

### **2.1.2. Methods for obtaining information about public services**

Most citizens of Kolasin are not informed about the work, activities and services that the Municipality provides. Information about the municipality is not well presented on the website of the Municipality, which prevents people from gaining better insight into many important things happening in their environment. There is a general opinion that the website needs to be improved and contain more relevant information. In addition, it must be updated regularly, provide clear information, be more interactive, etc. This can also be achieved through social networks, which are not currently used.

Respondents from the youth FGD think that interactive internet profile of municipality would enable them to get more information about the activities of the Municipality.

**“Programs regarding electronic ways of sharing information need to be further developed. The website of the Municipality is monotonous and boring.”**

*Quote from the Youth FGD*

A very small amount of information is received through daily newspapers and TV channels. Thus, re-opening local TV and radio

stations might further improve the information access of all groups, especially persons with disabilities. Participants of this FGD proposed having a special radio or TV program that would be dedicated to problems of people with disabilities.

**“A representative of the municipality would be required to submit a monthly report on television on what has been done in the past month to improve the status of persons with disabilities and children with disabilities.”**

*Quote from the people with disabilities FGD*

Participants from the NGO FGD noted that although the level of information available to them is low, the Municipality is not the only one to blame, because NGOs also have a responsibility to share. They do not always show initiative to information, but mainly use sources available to them through the internet.

### **2.1.3. Methods for inquiries/complaints about services and participation**

Respondents think that complaint mechanisms are not familiar to citizens, which is why citizens do not use them. The main reason is that the Municipality did not invest enough work to inform citizens and NGOs about the complaint mechanisms and possibility to submit complaints on services and work of the Municipality.

**“Why submit a complaint when it does not have any effect? To whom?”**

**“If you complain, you are just screwed.”**

*Quotes from the unemployed FGD*

Moreover, the majority of respondents think that, not only is there no point in filing a complaint, but that there is a fear of possible retaliation. Respondents think that if you are aware of some problem, you cannot solve it individually but only through collective work, which is why they are usually not forced to fight their battles individually.

## **2.2. Opportunities and Constraints for Social Accountability and Engagement**

### **2.2.1. City Activities related to Accountability and Citizen Engagement**

Cooperation between the municipality, NGOs and other groups of citizens is still not at a desirable level. Nevertheless, there is a large space for further improvement of this cooperation through the use of existing platforms and establishment of new mechanisms for cooperation. NGOs and other groups are often passive when it comes to their involvement in decision-making processes. In general, respondents are not satisfied with the role of NGOs and other groups of citizens, although opinions differ slightly. Many respondents are not familiar with the work of NGOs at the municipal level or their contribution. Respondents from the NGO FGD think that there are numerous positive examples of activities of NGOs, which have made major contributions to the promotion of the municipality through various events. On the other hand, however, NGOs are quite passive, do not participate in working groups, and do not use the

“Empty chair institute.” At the same time, participants thought that the municipality did not make enough of an effort to present available mechanisms to NGO representatives for their involvement in the decision-making process.

The same applies to citizens. Citizens are not well informed about the activities of the municipality and the possibilities to get involved in the process. Citizens are generally dissatisfied with both the municipality and NGOs when it comes to addressing their problems

**“Citizens should be encouraged to participate more actively in making important decisions, because most of those decisions concern citizens.”**

*Quote from the unemployed FGD*

One thing in common for each FGD was the fact that participants mentioned that no NGO deals specifically with the problems of the groups of citizens in the FGDs, while existing NGOs only sporadically speak about the problems of these groups. Due to dissatisfaction with the work of local NGOs, some respondents, such as the ones from the youth FGD stated that they are considering establishing an NGO that would deal with problems of regular citizens, with a special emphasis on youth. They think that citizens and NGOs should be included through programs that would be financed by the municipality and would deal with entertainment, culture, development of sport and recreational activities, employment and self-employment of young people and the development of youth programs in rural communities. Quite similarly, respondents from the unemployed FGD believe that the establishment of an NGO that would deal exclusively with the problems of unemployment would contribute to a realistic assessment of the situation and problems of the unemployed. This would also be followed with engagement of an NGO representative in the Local Council for Employment.

**“If there are no measurable results, there should be no incentives either.”**

*Quote from the unemployed FGD*

Respondents strongly believe that there is no real necessity for incentives to citizens and NGOs in order for them to get involved in municipal activities, but it is desired. Thus, involvement of NGOs and citizens would be improved. Some, however, think that these incentives should be given depending on the results of activities of citizens involved.

Nevertheless, all respondents concluded that closer and more effective cooperation between various stakeholders in municipality should be one of the main priorities for the municipality. This is to be achieved by finding new models of greater involvement of citizens and NGOs in the work of municipality.

### **2.2.2. Perceived obstacles to participation in decision making**

Besides the weak economic state in the Municipality of Kolasin, corruption is the main problem for the development of Kolasin, social inclusion and citizen engagement. Opinions among respondents vary regarding corruption issues and the dedication of the municipality to overcome this problem.

Some FGD participants believed that corruption is still highly present in municipality, especially in the employment sector where regulations concerning the employment of people with disabilities are not implemented.

**“Of course they do not hire people with disabilities, because where would they employ their friends and party activists then?”**

*Quote from the people with disabilities FGD*

On the other hand, some participants felt that the state of things has been improved with the new local government. They do consider that corruption is still present within the local authorities, but not as much as previously.

**“If you are not a ruling party member, not even ten faculties will work for you!”**

**“Why should I apply to fixed announcements?”**

*Quotes from the unemployed FGD*

This problem was particularly present during the employment procedure. Previous governing structures clearly favoured party activism and people who were governing party members had more chances of getting a job than anyone else.

Moreover, some respondents still believe that public job announcements at the local level are fixed and that almost all positions are intended for someone specific. Respondents from the NGO FGD were more positive, claiming that this is the first time that they have noticed the municipality's efforts to introduce a "zero tolerance for corruption." However, this tendency is carried out mainly thanks to the personal efforts of the Mayor, but they strongly hope that “this will quickly become a systematic tendency and not just an individual commitment to finally bring some order.”

### **2.2.3. Suggestions for Improvement**

Discussions raised the fact that currently, there is no one in the Municipality who is in charge of cooperating with NGOs. Appointing a person within the Municipality to undertake this responsibility might improve cooperation between civil society and the Municipality.

Some of the recommendations for improving efficiency in the fight against corruption, particularly in employment, included the establishment of some kind of body or local Employment Council, comprised of municipal officials and owners/representatives of local companies and experts from CSOs, that would coordinate employment policies, initiate and assist with employment and self-employment programs, give recommendations in choosing professions that are needed for the Municipality and possibly give scholarships to students. Furthermore, respondents strongly believe that this would provide visible results very quickly.

## **2.3. Social Inclusion vis-à-vis Service Provision**

All FGDs considered that people with disabilities are the most discriminated against when it comes to their access to services and information. The Municipality does not show enough attention to vulnerable groups, nor does it try to facilitate their access to services and

information. Respondents from the youth and unemployed FGDs claimed that besides people with disabilities, they find themselves to be a vulnerable group.

The quality of services in the municipality was rated at a low level, with a special emphasis on the quality of services to vulnerable groups. Respondents also think that the municipality does nothing to approach various groups, such as youth, which is why they consider the quality of services to be at the lowest level.

**“No one cares about me, no one offers me any perspective...smart people are long gone from here...”**

*Quotes from the Youth FGD*

**“You do not have a job, you cannot find a job... there is no greater discrimination.”**

*Quote from the unemployed FGD*

On the other hand, the unemployed consider themselves to be discriminated against and marginalised, considering that they do not have great prospects in terms of employment. The reason for this is the weak economic situation of the municipality and lack of investments in Kolasin. Since no new positions have opened in the last several years, there is no possibility for people to find a job. Besides the central government, respondents see the Municipality as one of the crucial actors in creating new positions and attracting new investors to the municipality.

## 2.4. In-Depth Interviews

In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) were held with two representatives of the Municipality, two CSO representatives, two business sector representatives and one representative of the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare. Five interviews were held on a one-on-one basis and were audio recorded, while one was provided in written form, as per the request of the participant.

The City Team conducted IDIs with the following respondents:

**Goran Rakočević**, Municipality of Kolasin, Secretary of the Secretariat for Economy and Finance

**Perunika Popović**, Municipality of Kolasin, Municipal Administrator

**Ana Danilović**, Executive director of the NGO “Zvijezda”

**Balša Cvetković**, Executive director of Cluster Initiative

**Predrag Drljević**, Executive director of SUR “Bačko”

**Svetlana Krgović**, Executive director of DOO “Dizni”

IDIs helped identify and confirm challenges within the municipality. The quality of information and services provided to citizens is very low and needs to be seriously improved. Some services have still not lived up to their potential and the Municipality still does not have information about all vulnerable groups to address their most pressing service challenges. Cooperation with citizens and NGOs is also a challenge since citizens and NGOs are not fully aware of the mechanisms that they can use to cooperate with the Municipality, nor is there clear will or interest on both sides to establish closer cooperation. Besides transparency and accountability, one of the main problems in Kolasin is corruption, which is deeply entrenched in all segments of the Municipality, including both the private and public sector. Such corruption was especially present during the privatization process, which has destroyed the economic development of Kolasin in the long term. In order to improve the situation, further professionalization of municipal administrators and staff and the development of the private sector are necessary.

### ***Information and services***

Although interviewees provided various responses to questions of access to information and services, there is a general conclusion that not all citizens have the same rights and opportunities at the municipal level. Openness of the municipality when it comes to information has improved to some extent recently. According to respondents, the current Mayor of Kolasin has managed to improve transparency through regular meetings with citizens and they are quite satisfied with this development. On the other hand, some municipal bodies are still not very transparent, considering that most of them are undergoing serious internal changes and restructuring.

Much more needs to be done, particularly in the area of electronic communication with citizens. Furthermore, citizens must take a more proactive approach to using existing mechanisms to access information held the municipality. The municipality should consider the possibility of establishing new mechanisms for cooperation with citizens and promoting existing mechanisms, since a large majority of citizens are not aware of these mechanisms. Most people still acquire information through personal contacts, like friends and relatives working in the Municipality, while few obtain information through the website of the Municipality.

The majority of people interviewed consider that citizens, especially vulnerable groups, do not have adequate access to information and services. One of the reasons is that the majority of information is published on the website of the Municipality, while a large number of citizens of Kolasin, especially those living in rural parts of municipality, do not have internet access. Furthermore, respondents emphasized the lack of interest among certain groups for acquiring information about the municipality.

Furthermore, municipal services do not function to their full capacities. This especially refers to persons with disabilities, who cannot access municipal buildings because they do not have basic design conditions for accessibility. According to respondents, the main reason for the weak relationship between the municipality and people with disabilities is that the local government does not have access to citizens' social cards, resulting in inadequate information about vulnerable groups.

Considering the economic situation in Kolasin, service prices vary from service to service, but respondents generally think that the price of electricity and water are too high, while the price for utilities is bearable. Some respondents think that it is necessary to prepare an analysis of living expenses in Kolasin and, in this way, set affordable prices for certain services. In addition, special attention should be paid to vulnerable groups and their living conditions when setting prices. For this group of people, special privileges or subsidies could reduce the negative effects of those who cannot pay the full price.

### ***Cooperation with citizens and NGOs***

IDIs revealed that opinions are divided when it comes to the contribution of citizens and NGOs. While some consider citizens' and NGOs' activities very valuable and of special importance for the municipality, others think that neither NGOs nor citizens have contributed significantly to development of Kolasin. Moreover, they think that citizens were very inactive and did not show any interest in involving themselves in the everyday life of their municipality. A similar situation might apply to NGOs as well, although respondents claim that there are no clear mechanisms for cooperation between the Municipality and NGOs, and that only certain NGOs are active, but are not well organized to conduct their activities.

There are, on the other hand, some examples of cooperation between NGOs and the Municipality, wherein NGOs have applied for funds with joint project proposals with the Municipality. Nevertheless, all respondents believe that there is plenty of room for improvement. The importance of the involvement of citizens and NGOs is particularly valuable in creating local policies and budget. NGOs should certainly aspire to strengthen their own role by uniting in accordance with their fields of activity and expertise in some areas. Much more could be achieved through joint work than by individual NGOs.

### ***Corruption***

Corruption has been identified as a crucial problem in the Municipality of Kolasin. Although there are no concrete cases of corruption that have been discovered and supported by evidence, respondents believe that it is still a stumbling block for further development of Kolasin. According to respondents, corruption “ate” the economy in Kolasin and it is the main cause of the trend of young people leaving the municipality in search of a better life. Some respondents claim that the Municipality has already conducted a large number of activities to eliminate corruption, but unfortunately they have been met with strong resistance.

In the previous period corruption was a significant issue in the Municipality. Thus, some believe that within current governing structures there is zero tolerance for corruption and that, if there is still corruption within the Municipality, it is mainly among lower-level employees. Reducing corruption is being achieved mainly by working in accordance with the laws and by making the functioning of the Municipality more transparent. Furthermore, the Municipality has adopted an integrity plan for this year and it is already preparing a new integrity plan for next year.

Some respondents, however, do think that more effort is needed to fight corruption and that the municipality still does not fight corruption adequately. Until recently, corruption was widely spread in relation to the private sector because in order to get any approval, license or the possibility to operate on a municipal level, there was a certain price you needed to pay, whether by employing members of governing political parties or by giving personal benefits to responsible persons.

### ***Further professionalization***

The municipal administration is not yet fully professionalized, although it has improved in the last several years. The reason lies in the fact that previous governing structures did not pay special attention to the development and improvement of capacities of the municipal administration. In this way, the municipality was not interested in developing its capacities for finding additional sources of funding or using existing resources to accumulate funds.

There is a lot of room for the professionalization of administrative workers at all levels. As mentioned earlier, respondents suggested that more should be done on establishing closer cooperation with experts and NGOs through the organization of public debates, round tables, consultative meetings, etc. This would also enable municipal services to receive feedback on their activities, as well as to gather new ideas for future activities.

### ***Private sector***

Since corruption and a failed privatization process has destroyed the economy of Kolasin, what is left of the private sector is a very small number of private companies that should be initiators of development in this municipality. Mutual cooperation between the private sector and the Municipality is indispensable. However, the current situation lacks mutual cooperation. First of

all, the private sector does not get any benefits from the Municipality, even if they employ more people from this Municipality. The same applies when it comes to the employment of people with disabilities. The only privileges they get are those from the central level.

Communication with the Municipality is very weak and must be improved. This could probably be achieved through the appointment of a coordinator between the municipality and the private sector to create conditions for better communication and cooperation. Private enterprises, on the other hand, aim to help the municipality by regularly settling all their obligations and promoting municipality.

### **3. Participatory Scenario Development Outcomes and Recommendations**

The Participatory Scenario Development Workshop in the Municipality of Kolasin was organized on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. MANS organized the event jointly with the Municipality of Kolasin. The Municipality itself recognized serious problems when it comes to CSO and citizens' participation, which were reflected in the event itself.

Considering that Kolasin is a small municipality that has large challenges when it comes to citizen engagement, the City Team tried to gather as many people as possible for the workshop. Therefore, representatives of several NGOs in Kolasin that are active, as well as representatives of business and media, and representatives of the Union of Municipalities of Montenegro were invited to participate. All together, 30 people were invited to participate in the event. The logistical part, concerning the submission of invitations to representatives of NGOs, business and media, was conducted by an NGO from Kolasin that has very good relations with other NGOs, in order to ensure that the invitation reached all subjects whose participation in the event would be useful.

The event was organized in the Municipal Centre for Culture and started at 10 a.m. However, the event was only attended by 12 people, mainly from the Municipality of Kolasin. Thus, the workshop had representatives of various services of the Municipality, including the Chief of the Communal Police, Director of the Water Supply Service, the Secretary of the Urban Development Service, the Chief Administrator of the Municipality, the Director of the Center for Culture, and several other employees in the Municipality. The workshop was attended by only two representatives of local NGOs and no representatives from the business of media sectors. When it comes to representatives of NGOs, the City Team received informal information that they would not participate in the event due to disagreements with the local authorities, leading them to boycotting the event. A similar situation was noted with representatives of business, although there had not been any confirmation before then. The workshop also benefited from the presence of a special guest, the World Bank team member, Astrid Meixner, who also had very active role in the workshop and encouraged debate.

The introductory speech was given by the Mayor of the Municipality, Ms. Zeljka Vuksanovic. She gave a comprehensive overview of what has been happening in the last several years in the Municipality of Kolasin, presenting numerous problems that the current governing structure of the municipality is facing, especially when it comes to financial and economic aspects of the municipality. After the Mayor, the attendees were addressed by the WB team member, Ms. Astrid Meixner, who presented all components of the UPP program and gave specific insight into the importance of having people strongly involved in decision-making processes. The third speaker, who also had a longer presentation of the major findings that arose from the desk research, interviews and focus groups discussions, was the representative of the NGO MANS, Aleksandar Maskovic. The presenter especially emphasized the main problems in the municipality, according to the interview respondents and FGDs participants. Although there were a serious number of problems raised, the presenter discussed three key problems (although corruption issues were not discussed, having in mind that this problem will be tackled through the other UPP components):

- A lack of transparency and access to information and low citizen engagement;

- Quality of services provided and improvement of the professionalization of employees in the Municipality; and
- Weak employment policies at the local level and corruption issues.

After presenting the problems, the City Team proposed some of the solutions that were discussed during FGDs and interviews, but also wanted to hear more from the representatives of the municipality. Work was done as one group and together participants discussed each of these problems, even though some of them have been partially targeted by the other UPP components.

### **3.1. Theme 1: Lack of Transparency and Access to Information; Low Citizen Engagement**

Although this problem has been recognized in the research phase, according to the workshop discussion, this aspect has seriously improved. Considering some specific responses from the FGDs and interviews, one can assume that the main issue concerning this challenge is the practice of the previous governing structures of the municipality, because people have also recognised that things have slightly improved. Nevertheless, there are still numerous problems that should be dealt with. As mentioned previously, attendees were required to work as a group and discuss all these issues jointly.

#### ***3.1.1. Existing problems and corresponding potential solutions***

a. Lack of updated information on the work of municipality

b. Low visibility and general lack of information on the work of the Municipality

**Solution:** Improve the website and employ new people that will deal with various sources of information, including social networks

c. Low level of engagement of local communities within the Municipality

**Solution:** More engagement from local communities in decision-making processes and in informing citizens about certain problems and actions

d. Non-existence of local radio or television, which could be used for further distribution of information on the work of the Municipality and possible engagement of citizens

**Solution:** Establish a local radio, which could be a new channel for distributing information

e. Citizens’ “fear” that the existing practices of service provision is just temporary and might go back to the old practice

**Solution:** Ensure that all current municipal offices are delivering the best quality services, no matter the political, national, religious or other affiliation of citizens

f. Citizens’ apathy

**Solution:** Offer non-sensitive issues to citizens to solve jointly

### **3.1.2. Vision: (desired situation)**

#### **Citizens are informed daily about the work of the Municipality and engage in its activities**

According to citizens, the current state of information sharing is at the lowest levels, which means that it has to be improved. People in the Municipality are aware of such problems, which is a good thing, although they are not sure whether this change is possible any time soon. According to people who were participating in the workshop, the Municipality has already laid off around 100 workers due to the fact that Kolasin had too many employees who did not meet expectations. On the other hand, due to serious financial problems, as well as to problems in relations with institutions at the central level, this municipality could not employ new people, who could conduct some activities to improve the current state of affairs.

According to people from the Municipality, some results might be achieved if the Municipality established a local radio station, which should have been established years ago. Through this channel, they would be able to reach people in less urban parts of the Municipality and inform them about developments more often. Additionally, they think that by distributing printed materials, additional results might be achieved, although the Municipality needs money for printing materials and distributing them.

Furthermore, people in local communities should organize regular meetings with members of the community and discuss issues concerning the work of the Municipality. Such an activity does not require any additional funds, which means that it is much easier to conduct this activity.

In the end, one of the proposals regarding information sharing was employment of a person who would be in charge of the municipal website and social networks. However, according to the Mayor of Kolasin, this is not easy to achieve, considering the abovementioned problems with financial, state, and employment restrictions.

#### ***Specific Proposal: Open new channels for communication with citizens***

**WHAT** Prepare an act that would oblige local communities to organize regular meetings and workshops with members of the local communities; Open a local radio station; Improve the website and use social networks;

**WHY** This would encourage citizens to try and influence decisions that concern them directly through their involvement in local communities. Thus, they would not have to address the Municipality directly, but would actually do that through the community representatives. Moreover, meetings and workshops will help citizens get information they otherwise would not obtain.

**HOW** The Municipality is already working on possible solutions to try to overcome current obstacles, when it comes to citizen engagement. The municipality will engage in consultations with local community representatives and present them with these solutions. It will also try to include all the interested NGOs in this process and form a “coalition”, which would try to activate citizens to take more proactive approach in getting information regarding developments in the Municipality. Depending on the outcome of the interest of all

subjects, some this act may be adopted and it would give clear guidelines for local communities how to inform citizens about the local community meeting, what might be the topics to discuss about, etc.

<b>WHO</b>	Municipality of Kolasin, local communities, interested NGOs, citizens
<b>WHEN</b>	1-2 years
<b>INDICATORS</b>	Act is prepared and adopted; Number of meetings with the local communities; Number of local communities' meetings; Number of NGOs involved; Number of citizens involved; Number of brochures distributed to citizens; Number of other channels used; Number of activities conducted jointly with citizens, etc.
<b>HOW MUCH</b>	Costs for the establishment of a local radio station; costs for printing and distributing materials/brochures; costs of employing people in charge of the website and social networks; etc. Tentative estimate: 12,000 – 17,000 EUR.

### **3.2. Theme 2: Quality of service provision and improvement of the professionalism of employees in the Municipality**

As one of the main problems within the municipality, the quality of service provision is still not at a satisfactory level. The main cause for this is that the majority of employees in the Municipality are still not sufficiently professional in dealing with certain issues. Nevertheless, through the discussion in the workshop, representatives of the Municipality rejected the idea of a “one-stop shop”, due to the fact that the municipal building is very small and that all services are very physically close. As for the vulnerable groups, there is a serious lack of institutions that help vulnerable groups. On the other hand, attendees of the workshop recognized some severe problems within the Municipality.

#### **3.2.1. Existing problems and corresponding potential solutions**

a. Lack of professional civil servants

**Solution:** Employ new civil servants and conduct targeted training for employees in the Municipality

b. Weakly organized administration

**Solution:** Improve the organization of the local administration and division of responsibilities

c. Low salaries of civil servants

**Solution:** Improve the financial status of the municipal administration

d. Lack of construction solutions for vulnerable groups

**Solution:** Construction of access ramps in the municipal building and other municipal services

### 3.2.2. *Vision: (desired situation)*

#### **Citizens are satisfied with the quality of services provided by the Municipality**

Considering the various problems that the Municipality has in securing quality service provision, there needs to be some serious changes. Thus, the main goal is to have citizens that are satisfied with how the services have been provided to them, as well as with the quality of these services.

This could be achieved through further improvement of existing capacities of the Municipality and through the employment of new ones. When it comes to municipal servants of the administration, the Municipality is not satisfied with the current level of trainings and workshops that employees have the opportunity to participate in. First of all, a large number of these trainings are organized by the Human Resources Management Administration, but these trainings are just the basic ones and do not go into specific details. Therefore, the administration needs specific trainings in specific areas. Furthermore, the Municipality needs new human resources to meet citizens' expectations.

When it comes to service provision, considering that the Municipality is against the establishment of new institutes (such as the "one-stop shop"), this could be improved through the implementation of new systems. For example, a "72 hours system" could be used for solving citizens' problems or meeting their needs in the first 72 hours of reporting the problem.

***Specific Proposal: Organize specific trainings for the local administration and provide vulnerable groups with access to municipal services***

**WHAT** Sign a memoranda on cooperation with municipalities from other countries on sharing best practices; Adoption of a strategy for the development of human resources; Organize specific trainings; Build access ramps for persons with disabilities;

**WHY** Firstly, the memoranda on cooperation with other municipalities would help the Municipality of Kolasin to gather best practices from around the region on how to provide services to citizens. Also, it would make people from the Municipality less cut off from the rest of the world, considering that they currently have almost no support from the central authorities. Also, given the weak financial status of local administration, as well as a lack of employees, one of the things that might be very useful for the Municipality is to adopt a strategy for the development of human resources. This act would include a clear vision as to the development of the municipal administration, as well as where to increase salaries among people who are under the largest burden. It would include a clear plan defined to see what could be achieved in the next several years. This should be, however, followed by the organization of trainings for the local administration in the areas of greatest importance to the quality of service delivery. Also, to ensure that each citizen has the same rights, the Municipality

should invest in the construction of access ramps at the entrance of the municipal building and other buildings for municipal services.

<b>HOW</b>	The Municipality should prepare and adopt a strategy for the development of human resources, by including people from CSOs and institutions at the central level. It should also link Kolasin with municipalities from the region through the World Bank and organize trainings where people from other municipalities could present their practices to the Municipality of Kolasin. On the other hand, the Municipality should contact experts in certain areas to prepare and conduct trainings for specific sectors relevant to the local administration. In addition, the Ministry of Finance, which is in charge of granting permission for hiring employees in the Municipality as well as for other investments (such as construction of accession ramps), should revise annual budgets and possibly provide additional money to the Municipality of Kolasin.
<b>WHO</b>	Municipality of Kolasin, institutions at the central level, municipalities from the region, interested NGOs, international organizations
<b>WHEN</b>	1-4 years
<b>INDICATORS</b>	Working group for the development of a strategy formed; Number of external experts and CSO representatives included; Strategy prepared and adopted; Number of memoranda signed; Number of new employees; Number of trainings; Number of participants in trainings; Number of access ramps built, etc.
<b>HOW MUCH</b>	Cost for organization of trainings/fees to experts; Costs for salaries for new employees; Costs for access ramps; etc. Tentative estimate: 7,000 – 12,000 EUR.

### **3.3. Theme 3: Weak employment policies at the local level**

The Municipality of Kolasin is aware of severe problems concerning economic development and local employment policies. However, at this point, they are very skeptical of whether this can be changed in the next few years, considering that the central institutions, primarily the Ministry of Finance, is not providing any kind of support to local authorities in Kolasin.

#### ***3.3.1. Existing problems and corresponding potential solutions***

a. Low number of enterprises in Kolasin and possibilities for employment

**Solution:** Increase the number of loans and subsidies to private enterprises (low and medium-level business)

b. Non-existence of a service that would deal with project planning and writing

**Solution:** Employ and train civil servants that could deal with proposal writing

c. Non-existence of a municipal office for local economic development

**Solution:** Establish a municipal office for local economic development

### 3.3.2. *Vision: (desired situation)*

#### **Kolasin has a solid economy and very low unemployment rate**

The Municipality of Kolasin strives to secure that it has very good economy and satisfied citizens who will not leave the Municipality. In the previous several years, the number of citizens of Kolasin has been steadily decreasing, due to an outflow of citizens towards the central and southern parts of the country. In order to stop this and prevent such trends in the future, the Municipality has to make some efforts to secure new work places. This can only be achieved by joining forces with local businesses.

Local authorities have already made some efforts to secure that local people can find employment, but they have faced serious obstacles from the central government once again. This case refers to the construction of a highway, where people from the Chinese company that is constructing highway asked the Municipality of Kolasin about their needs and offered possible employment opportunities. However, people who were supposed to get a job were undermined for political reasons, so none of the workers went for special trainings in order to be included in the construction of the highway.

***Specific Proposal: Establish a service for writing project proposals and an office for local development***

**WHAT** Adoption of a strategy for local development; Establish a service for project proposal writing; Establish an office for local development; Organize regular meetings with local businesses;

**WHY** The Municipality of Kolasin should develop a strategy for local economic development, where they could define ways for improving the economic state in the municipality. Furthermore, it would motivate citizens to get more involved in creating their future and in decision-making. Also, this may reverse the outmigration of citizens from this municipality.

**HOW** This could be achieved through the organization of meetings with local businesses to explore the possibilities for cooperation with private enterprises. Furthermore, the Municipality should establish a service for project proposal writing and secure trainings for people from this service. It could open new doors to the Municipality in creating possible new positions, attracting money and new investments, etc. The Municipality would benefit from the establishment of an office for local economic development, through which it could define clear steps for further improvement and offer new ideas for project proposals.

**WHO** Municipality of Kolasin, local businessmen, international organizations, citizens

<b>WHEN</b>	1-4 years
<b>INDICATORS</b>	Working group for the development of a strategy formed; Strategy prepared and adopted; Number of people employed for project proposals writing; Office for local economic development established; Number of people employed in the office for local economic development; Number of trainings for people in charge of project proposals; Number of meetings with local business companies, etc.
<b>HOW MUCH</b>	Cost for organization of trainings; Costs for salaries for new employees; etc. Tentative estimate: 10,000 – 15,000 EUR.

## 4. Key Considerations for Next Steps

The main problem identified in the workshop was that citizens in general are very passive and, from this perspective, there is no clear vision about how this can be changed. Such a state is the result of previous governing structures, which did not take into account the opinions of the general public. Therefore, citizens think that there is no point in giving their opinion about certain issues and lose the will to try to influence municipal policies.

Nevertheless, there were several proposals that show that this could be changed in the next several years, although people from the Municipality are aware that this process will be very slow and painful, but worth it in the end. Thus, through the workshop, the main issues identified during the scenario development were the following:

- I It is necessary to use new channels to inform citizens about the possibilities to become engaged in municipal activities, such as regular meetings with members of the local community, as well as to potentially invest in opening a local radio and encourage the use of the municipal website and social networks in communicating with younger generations.
- II The Municipality of Kolasin must establish cooperation with cities and municipalities from other countries and share best practices. This would be very useful to adopt new practices in providing services and resolving peoples' issues.
- III One of the main goals of the Municipality is to build a strong base for economic development by establishing a service for project proposal writing. The majority of participants mentioned this is a crucial step, as it would help to attract new investments, create new jobs, etc.

Research in the Municipality of Kolasin was very useful from several perspectives. Firstly, the Municipality discovered that the information that they possess about the municipality is outdated. Thus, through this research, they will get new information regarding the general state of the Municipality. Secondly, although CSOs unofficially boycotted the workshop, the City Team managed to gather some conclusions and develop possible measures for the improvement of the Municipality. Thirdly, the Municipality definitely found out that it needs to focus on the engagement of citizens in decision-making processes, as the benefits from this would be multiple. However, for all of this, the Municipality needs support from the central government and institutions, including both financial and moral support. Nevertheless, this will be a long-lasting process, but hopefully, results of this process will be beneficial to the Municipality, businesses, citizens and the country in general.

During the Socially Inclusive Cities regional conference held in Zagreb at the end of March 2017, city representatives stated that Kolasin, with the recent change in administration, has placed an importance on bringing the budget into the public eye and enhancing communication between citizens and the government to persist throughout election cycle periods. The administration is committed and willing to network with other local governments to learn from their experiences and together, make progress towards EU accession. Next steps for Action Plans include determining the most appropriate indicators to measure the results of the action plan initiatives (both quantitatively and qualitatively) and developing precision as to how to include the beneficiaries of municipal services from the beginning of action plan implementation to the end. The plan also needs to be accompanied by a communications strategy.

## ANNEX 1: SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT INDEX

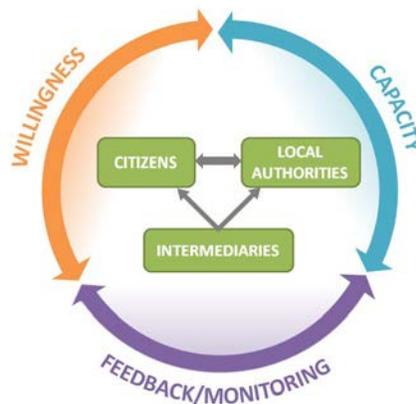
### Concept Note

The objective of the SSCE Index is to assist municipalities, civic groups and NGOs to develop a set of indicators that gauge progress towards increasing social accountability and citizen engagement, particularly among marginalized communities or vulnerable groups.

The Index originally emerged from the Social Sustainability Audit of UPP I (2012-2013), which functioned as a tool used by City Teams to assess the supply and demand of information and participation in a given municipality and the state of feedback/monitoring mechanisms based on the three data gathering phases – Municipal Profile, FGDs and IDIs, and Participatory Scenario Development Workshops. This index has been revised in content and application to demonstrate greater conceptual linkages with the other three UPP II initiatives and alignment with the World Bank’s Citizen Engagement Framework.

The consortium built upon the Index developed during UPP I and tried to preserve as much of its content as was relevant to the new conceptual organization of the new Index. While the Social Sustainability Index assessed the supply and demand side factors of Transparency and Participation and the feedback mechanisms that create a continuous process, the SSCE Index assesses the supply and demand sides of willingness and capacity for citizen engagement, as well as the feedback mechanisms that create a continuous process and the use of ICT to broaden the reach of CE initiatives and streamline CE processes.

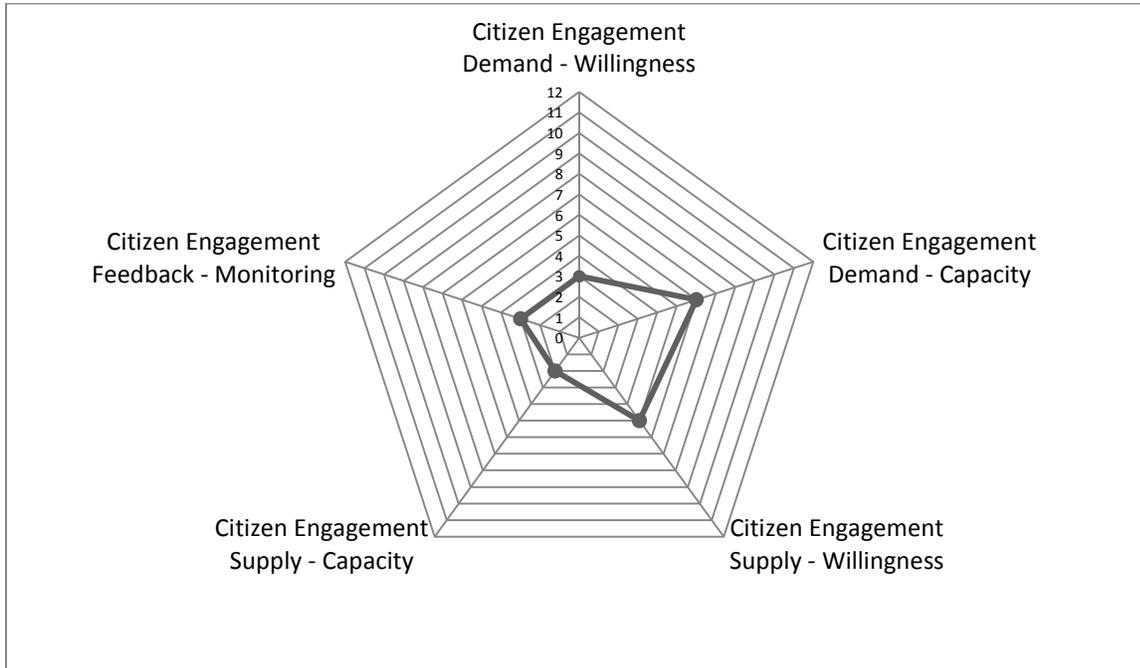
### Conceptual Framework of the SSCE Index



The SSCE Index is structured as a series of six questions for each of the five pillars of citizen engagement being investigated throughout this project cycle based on the three concepts of Willingness (demand and supply); Capacity (demand and supply); and the Feedback/Monitoring that serves as the connective tissue. In addition, the same six questions can be read in a way that gives an additional reading of the thematic strengths and weaknesses of social accountability and citizen engagement initiatives in each municipality (a “pulse” on perceptions of citizen engagement in areas related to other components of the UPP).

During the project, MANS administered over 30 SSCE Index questionnaires that were filled in by FGD and IDI participants and PSD participants. Disaggregated information is not disclosed due to the fact that this questionnaire was anonymous. However, participants found that the response options were not adequate, due to fact that they do not have information about each of the categories, which is why they had fear that they cannot give a proper answer. Due to this, they have in many cases chosen the response “somewhat”, although this response might not be the correct one. The results of this process are presented below.

### Index Results for Kolasin



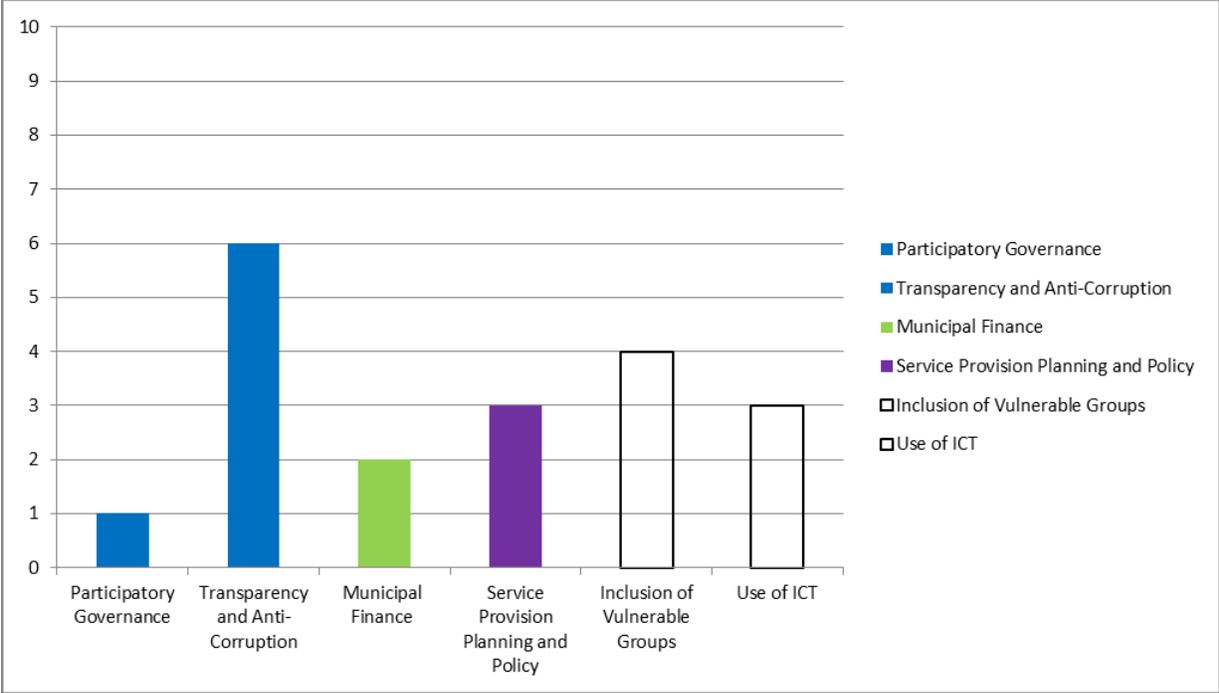
As can be seen in the chart, on the supply side, “capacity” scored much lower than “willingness”, while on the demand side, it was quite the opposite. When it comes to “citizen engagement supply – capacity”, the Municipality was scored as very weak, considering that it still had not managed to cope with economic and financial issues. On the other hand, citizens are very passive and do not participate in decision-making process nor do they demand to participate in the budget process. Furthermore, they do not demand to participate in the process of budget preparation. However, one of the reasons might be the lack of platforms where citizens and CSOs could express their opinions about various issues.

When it comes to monitoring, one of the main problems is that the local communities are completely inactive, meaning that they do not offer any link between the citizens and the municipal government. Furthermore, there is no variety of mechanisms which could be used by citizens to address the Municipality about their issues.

These results regarding the index, nevertheless, pretty much follow and coincide with the findings from the desk research and FGDs and IDs. When it comes to the PSD workshop, people from the Municipality expressed that they have been trying their best to change this practice, but also admitted that this is something that Kolasin in general has problems with.

In order to see how social accountability and citizen engagement initiatives at the municipal level relate with themes such as anti-corruption, municipal finance, and urban planning and in order to find synergies between the SSCE program and other components of UPP II, responses of the participants in FGDs, IDIs and PSD workshop were analyzed by topic. These “pulse” scores for Kolasin are calculated below.

**Citizen Engagement Pulse Scores for Kolasin**



The Municipality of Kolasin scores relatively well when it comes to transparency and anti-corruption, which is a major step forward in comparison with the first findings from the research. In the beginning, participants in IDIs and FGDs stated that there are still many problems in this area, but also that the current local structures are doing well in this area and providing some results. As it can be seen from the chart, Kolasin scored the worst result in participatory governance, meaning that this is still the main issue and that it needs to be addressed as soon as possible. Citizens and CSOs must be motivated to take more activity in this area.

## ANNEX 2: INDEX QUESTIONS AND SCORING FRAMEWORK

	Participatory Governance (0,1,2)	Transparency & Anti-Corruption (0,1,2)	Municipal Finance (0,1,2)	Service Provision, Planning & Policy (0,1,2)	Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups (0,1,2)	Use of ICT (0,1,2)	
<b>CE Demand – Willingness</b>	1. Do citizens attend and actively participate in city council meetings?	2. Is there an anonymous way to report municipal fraud or corruption?	3. Is there demand for participatory budgeting processes from citizens or CSOs?	4. Do platforms exist through which civil society discusses municipal service / planning / policy?	5. Are minority or vulnerable communities represented in the current city council?	6. Do citizens and CSOs engage with the municipality online?	<b>Total CE Demand Willingness Score (out of 10)</b>
<b>CE Demand – Capacity</b>	1. Are there elected neighborhood councils or equivalent structures?	2. Are citizens given sufficient notice about upcoming city council meetings or public forums?	3. Are citizens aware of how the city's budget is spent?	4. Do citizens know where to go to report a municipal issue or grievance?	5. Do NGOs exist that actively engage in representing the interests of vulnerable groups?	6. Are citizens able to reliably access municipal information online?	<b>Total CE Demand Capacity Score (out of 10)</b>
<b>CE Supply – Willingness</b>	1. Is the municipality accountable to other institutions in terms of implementing mechanisms of citizen engagement?	2. Is there a document (charter) outlining the responsibilities of both government and citizens that is publicly accessible?	3. Does the city administration present municipal budgets to neighborhoods as part of the formal fiscal preparation cycle?	4. Is there an active information desk available to citizens?	5. Are vulnerable groups consulted in preparing strategic policy documents, budgets, etc.?	6. Does the municipality have an open data policy?	<b>Total CE Supply Willingness Score (out of 10)</b>
<b>CE Supply - Capacity</b>	1. Does the city hold meetings/ consultations with the public to gain information on issues that are important to citizens?	2. Is citizen-accessible information updated regularly through various platforms?	3. Does the municipality have financial resources for investment in citizen engagement or a participatory budget?	4. Is there an annual citizen service satisfaction survey?	5. Does the city have a program to engage with vulnerable groups or CSOs that represent them?	6. Are there municipal staff with ICT training or the opportunity for such training?	<b>Total CE Supply Capacity Score (out of 10)</b>
<b>CE Feedback / Monitoring</b>	1. Are neighborhood councils (or similar structures) effectively linking the citizens to the city (or municipality)?	2. Are citizen grievances responded to or addressed in a timely and transparent manner by the relevant departments / service providers?	3. Are citizen or civil society inputs incorporated into municipal budgets?	4. Are time limits for responses to citizen grievances / reports abided by?	5. Has the municipality addressed key issues of concern to vulnerable groups based on their inputs?	6. Do grievance/ complaint systems use multiple types of technology?	<b>Total CE Feedback Loop Score (out of 10)</b>
	<b>Total Participatory Governance Score (out of 10)</b>	<b>Total Transparency &amp; Anti-Corruption Score (out of 10)</b>	<b>Total Municipal Finance Score (out of 10)</b>	<b>Total Service Provision, Planning, and Policy (out of 10)</b>	<b>Total Inclusion Score (out of 10)</b>	<b>Total ICT Score (out of 10)</b>	<b>SSCE SCORE (out of 60)</b>
	↑ Cities without Corruption (CE Pulse)	↑ Cities without Corruption (CE Pulse)	↑ MFSA (CE Pulse)	↑ UPSA (CE Pulse)			