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Programme  
Project: “Empowering Participatory Budgeting in the Baltic Sea  
Region – EmPaci”

## Documentation of 1<sup>st</sup> PB pilot

### Gatchina Municipal District, Leningrad Region (Russia)

*(for the full report of all pilot municipalities, see main document)*

## GoA 2.3 Output 2

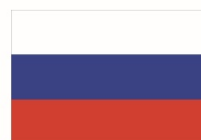
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## Content

<b>Gatchina Municipal District, Leningrad Region/Russia</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Situation before the PB implementation</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Development of the 1<sup>st</sup> PB pilot</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Implementation of the 1<sup>st</sup> PB pilot</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>4. Results of 1st PB pilot</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>5. Assessment of 1<sup>st</sup> PB pilot and enhancement for 2<sup>nd</sup> PB pilot</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>6. Lessons learnt from the interruption of the PB process</b>	<b>19</b>

## Gatchina Municipal District, Leningrad Region/Russia

### 1. Situation before the PB implementation

#### Municipality-related factors

##### 1. The PB is implemented for

☐ District ☒ Municipality ☐ Planning region

##### 2. The budget cycle of the public authority is

☒ Annual ☐ Bi-annual

##### 3. The financial situation of the public authority characterised by

☐ Excess revenues ☒ Nearly balanced revenues and expenses ☐ Excess expenses

##### 4. With respect to the repayment of incurred debt, the public authority is confronted with

☒ No difficulties ☐ Difficulties to repay debts over an extended period of time

##### 5. In the public authority, the council always has the final decision right about the implementation of voted PB projects (by local/national) laws and regulations:

☒ Yes ☐ No

The results of citizens' voting are taken into account by the Council when making its decisions. Decisions of the Council, formalized in the form of Decree, are obligatory for implementation by the Administration of the municipality.

If yes, it is prescribed by local/national laws. ☒ Yes ☐ No

It is prescribed by an own PB regulation. ☒ Yes ☐ No

#### Citizen-related factors

##### 6. The citizenry is composed as follows:

6a. Number of citizens: 241 134

6b. Share of females (% of citizens): 55,1%

6c. Share of persons aged below 18 (% of citizens): 19,2%

6d. Share of persons aged 66 and above (% of citizens): 23,5%

6e. Share of unemployed persons (% of citizens): 0,7%

6f. Share of unemployed females (% of unemployed persons): 46%

**6g. Particularities of the population are the following:**

The Gatchina Municipal District is the municipality with the largest population in the Leningrad region. The rich cultural heritage and well-developed industry and agriculture make this municipality attractive for living, but, as in the entire Leningrad region, its population is decreasing.

The government of the Leningrad Region is located in St. Petersburg, but in 2020 it was decided to give Gatchina the status of the capital of the Leningrad Region and the government must complete the move to Gatchina by the end of 2021. This decision had a very strong impact on all previously launched projects and shifted the focus to the process of government relocation.

**PB process-related factors****7. PB is prescribed by law in the country / public authority:**☐ Yes☐ No

**Partly** (There are general requirements for the PB procedure, but there is no requirement for the mandatory presence of the PB itself)

**7a. If yes, based on this law / regulation: (provide name and link):**

Federal Law of 06.10.2003 N 131-FZ (as amended on 21.07.2020) "On the General Principles of Organization of Local Self-Government in the Russian Federation"  
<http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/20035>

**8. PB was implemented before the EmPaci PB pilot:**☒ Yes☐ No

## 2. Development of the 1<sup>st</sup> PB pilot

**Citizen- and PB process-related factors****9. PB is implemented to realize the following objectives:**

The main objective of introducing PB processes in Gatchina, according to the Head of Administration of the Gatchina Municipal District, was to acquire a positive image in the eyes of the Government of the Leningrad Region and local residents by demonstrating compliance with the requirements of the additions to 131 Federal Law (General principles of organization of local self-government in the Russian Federation) being developed at that time which was adopted on July 21, 2020 and in the final version did not contain requirements for the mandatory presence of PB in municipalities.

Having some experience of involving citizens in the processes of determining the urgent tasks of the development of municipal territories, the Administration expected to receive the following as additional results of the PB introduction:

Benefits:

- Better understanding of the immediate needs of local residents;
- Improving the attitude of citizens to the Administration as a result of its manifestation of interest in the opinion of residents;

Disbenefits:

- The need for additional human and material resources in connection with the implementation and regular execution of PB processes;
- Strengthening pressure on the administration from the side of citizens in matters of improvement of municipal territories.

#### **10. The following target groups are aimed to be involved in PB:**

In general, all interested adults in the municipality are going to be involved in the PB processes.

The EmPaci project experts tried several times to draw the attention of the Administration and the Council of the municipality to some imbalance in the activity of different categories of residents identified during the surveys, but it was decided not to focus on certain target groups.

##### **10a. Reasons, why these specific target groups were selected:**

The reason for the refusal to choose and apply different methods in relation to specific target groups was the lack of a goal of the Administration and the Council of the municipality to identify and meet the needs of any specific population groups.

Perhaps the “Most Active Citizens” can be considered a specific group that attracts the attention of the municipality leadership. However, this group does not require additional efforts to be involved in PB processes, due to its initial activity.

#### **11. Based on the analysis of the citizen survey, the following needs of citizens were taken into account for PB implementation:**

An earlier citizen survey showed that the greatest unmet needs of citizens are in the areas of health care, education and other social issues, but these areas are outside the competence of the municipality. Of those areas that are in the sphere of influence of the municipality, the most sought-after citizens are urban planning (in terms of determining the purpose and arrangement of individual municipal territories) and ecology.

## PB process-related factors

### 12. The following steps were undertaken to develop ideas and concepts for the PB process:

In making the decision to initiate the PB implementation project in the Gatchina municipal district, the following persons took part:

- Deputy Head of Administration for the Development of the Social Sphere
- EmPaci Project partner representatives (PP15, PP16, PP17)
- Experts from the North-West Institute of Management, branch of Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA, have prior experience in implementing PB in Russia)),
- Experts from the Autonomous non-profit organization "Competence Center of the Leningrad Region for the Development of the Urban Environment and a Smart City" (<https://sreda47.ru/>).
- Experts from the Formosa Group (developers of the web portal Active Citizen).

In total, in the period January - December 2020, 21 working meetings were held, as a result of which the following outputs were obtained:

- Agreement on Cooperation and the working interaction procedure between the Gatchina Administration, ITMO University and RANEPA (Jan 2020);
- The first draft of the Concept for the implementation of PB based on the current law on local self-government and the Standard for Citizens' Participation in Urban Development from the Ministry of Construction (Feb 2020);
- The first approved version of the Concept for the implementation of PB (April 2020);
- First draft versions of the PB administrative processes regulations and local normative acts legalizing them (April-June 2020);
- Updated and approved version of the Concept for the implementation of PB (Aug 2020, due to the adoption of the Federal Law on PB at the municipal level of July 21, 2020);
- Updated drafts of the PB administrative processes regulations and local normative acts legalizing them (Sep-Dec 2020);
- Terms of reference for the inclusion in the Active Citizen web portal of the functions necessary to support PB cycle(Sep-Nov 2020):
  - Initiative submission
  - Pre-moderation
  - Public discussion
  - Expertise
  - Rating voting
  - Implementation monitoring
- Trial launch of the function of citizen's initiative submitting to the Active Citizen web portal (Nov 2020);

**12a. Internal training activities were organised:**

☒ Yes ☐ No

The training activity was implemented in the form of a series of informal meetings of project partners and experts from RANEPa with representatives of the Administration and Council of the municipality in order to inform about the nature, goals, benefits and difficulties of the municipal PB and to discuss complex issues of its implementation and organization of interaction with residents.

**13. Citizens were involved in the development of the PB cycle the following way:**

The data about citizens' view on PB obtained in course of the citizen survey in 2020 were used in the in the development of the PB cycle.

The active involvement of citizens in the design and creation of the PB cycle was not done by the decision of the Administration of the municipality.

**14. Citizens were informed about PB initiation in the following way:**

Publication on the ITMO University website

- 19 November 2019 - <https://news.itmo.ru/ru/news/8958/>

Publication in the municipal newspaper Gatchinskaya Pravda (paper and online):

- 4 June 2020 - <https://gtn-pravda.ru/2020/06/04/v-gatchine-zarabotal-aktivniy-gorozhanin.html>

Publication on the official website of the Administration of the Gatchina Municipal District:

- 10 September 2020 - <http://radm.gtn.ru/events/news/?id=8126>

**14a. An own dissemination & communication plan was developed for this:**

☐ Yes ☒ No

**15. These were the (internal and external) main promoters and success factors in the development of PB:**

The main promoters were:

- The Administration of the Gatchina Municipal District,
- EmPaci Project partner representatives (PP15, PP16, PP17)
- Experts from the North-West Institute of Management, branch of Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPa),

Among the main success factors are:

- High level of IT readiness of citizens, which allowed the effective use of online engagement tools.

**16. These were the main opponents and hindrances in the development of PB and it was coped with these in the following way:**

**Political hindrances:** The decision to implement a PB pilot project in Gatchina was also made due to the active interest of the Head of the Municipality in the implementation of PB processes. However, during the project there was a change of the Head of the Municipality and the new Head was not motivated enough and did not provide sufficient support.

The government of the Leningrad Region is located in St. Petersburg since 1927, but in 2020 it was decided to give Gatchina the status of the capital of the Leningrad Region and the government must complete the move to Gatchina by the end of 2021. This decision had a very strong negative impact on all previously launched projects and shifted the focus to the process of government relocation.

The Leningrad Region in December 2020 introduced the "Platform for Feedback and Communication with Citizens", which is a part of the all-Russian federal project. All municipalities of the Leningrad Region are encouraged to use this platform to receive all applications from citizens. In this situation, the Administration of Gatchina believes that further development of the Active Citizen web portal and PB processes are inappropriate.

**Legislative Restrictions:** There is no requirement to have PB in a municipality, and a recent Federal law (adopted 21.07.2020) imposes restrictions on the design and execution of PB processes (For example, the Council and the Administration may consider initiatives submitted by at least 10 citizens jointly).

**Technical Restrictions:** From the very beginning of the pilot project, it was decided to actively use the Active Citizen website. Unfortunately, this tool did not have the functions necessary for the implementation of PB processes: public discussion, expert assessment, rating voting of submitted proposals.

**Rating voting** (also alternative voting) is one of the preferential voting systems in which voters rank candidates in order of preference, rather than just voting for one candidate. Here, each voter sees the rating of alternatives compiled by the results of voting by previous voters.

A lot of effort and time of the project experts was spent on creating the concept of missing functions, developing the technical specifications for their creation and testing and debugging the created prototypes.



**17. A project team for the PB development was formed:**

☒ Yes ☐ No

**17a. If yes, the project team was composed of the following functions and it was organized as follows:**

**Project Board:** Advisory and governing body, consisting of representatives of:

- Administration (funds manager - Deputy Head of Administration for the Development of the Social Sphere)
- EmPaci Project partners + Invited PB Experts - Methodological support, organization and moderation of meetings
- Experts from the Formosa Group (developers of the web portal Active Citizen).

**Project Manager:** Day-to-day management of the project - Expert from the North-West Institute of Management, branch of Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA).

**Web-portal Developers:** Developers from Formosa Group.

**17b. When and where are different types of resources (people, knowledge, funding) needed and made available in the pilot cases**

**Conceptual step:** Familiarization of Administration and discussion of the experience of introducing PB in different regions and countries, the choice of useful elements and the formation of the PB Concept that is optimal for Gatchina. EmPaci Project partners & Invited PB Experts. Analysis of the world experience in the PB implementation and the peculiarities of local conditions to prepare for presentations and discussions. Funding by the EmPaci project.

**PB Development step:** Implementation of the PB Concept - development of internal PB procedures, drafts of regulations, preparation of terms of reference for finalizing the Active Citizen web portal, preparation of information texts for publication. Joint work of the EmPaci project experts, Project Manager, and employees of various departments of the Municipality Administration. Payment for the work of the project experts was carried out from the funds of the EmPaci project. The contribution of the employees of the Municipality Administration was not paid.

**Starting the PB processes step:** Publication of information about the launch of PB in the municipality. Official launch of new functions of the Active Citizen web portal. Start of submission of proposals by citizens. Preliminary analysis of incoming proposals and their moderation. Registration of detected problems and their correction. Project Board, Project Experts, Project Manager, Web-Portal Developers and employees of various departments of the Municipality Administration. Payment for the work of the project experts was carried out from the funds of the EmPaci project. The contribution of the employees of the Municipality Administration was not paid.

- Collection of initiatives through the web portal Active Citizen, their classification and systematization (Web-portal Developers - Refinement, development of new functions, administration, support of the Active Citizen web portal. Funded by the Administration)
- Prioritizing territories most in need of improvement (Project Board – Not Implemented)
- Deciding on the choice of territory for improvement (Project Board – Not Implemented)

**Discussion phase:** determining the scope of the improvement project for the selected territory (Discussion and preliminary votes):

- Informing citizens about the selected territory and inviting them to discuss the content of the improvement (Project Manager – Not Implemented)
- Conduct of a series of online discussions and offline meetings with citizens (Project Board – Not Implemented)
- The final decision on the choice of the functional purpose of the selected territory, uniting the embodied ideas, the content of the territory (Project Board – Not Implemented).
- Preparation of project documentation for the development of the territory for the final vote (Project Manager)

**Voting phase:** Final discussion and vote to approve a proposed improvement project (Project Board – Not Implemented)

**Implementation phase:** Funding, organization of procurement, monitoring and control of work execution (Project Board – Not Implemented)

#### **18. For the IT part / online implementation of the PB, the following considerations and steps were taken:**

The relatively high IT literacy of the citizens, the newly created and launched Active Citizen web portal (<https://gtn.mycity365.ru/>) and the enthusiasm of the Municipality Administration in using this new IT tool led to the selection of this portal as the basis for the PB implementation. The procurement of Formosa Group services did not require competitive procurement procedures, since the web portal they created was still under their warranty service. The web portal Active Citizen was created by Formosa Group by order of the Administration of the municipality and was designed to collect applications from citizens about the shortcomings and accidents they noticed for their speedy elimination by municipal services. Formosa Group designers and programmers were ready to continue work on the further development of the web portal, and the Project Partners and Experts were able to write the Terms of Reference for the creation of additional functions necessary to support PB processes: moderation of submitted proposals, expert evaluation of proposals, public discussion of proposals, rating voting of proposals, monitoring implementation of the proposals accepted for execution. The choice made allowed to reduce the cost and increase the speed of creating an IT tool for the implementation of PB in the municipality and did not create new additional costs for the further operation of this tool.

**In case PB existed before the 1st pilot by the EmPaci project:**

**19a. The following suggestions for changes were made from the EmPaci team to improve the process:**

The focus on attracting external funds as a result of participation in the tenders of the Ministry of Construction of the Russian Federation did not meet the requirements of the EmPaci project and the Project Partners were recommended to exclude this factor from the PB Concept.

**19b. Of these suggestions, the following were implemented in the PB pilot:**

The focus on spending part of one's own municipal budget as a result of the PB processes has been put into practice.

**19c. Of these suggestions, the following were not implemented in the PB pilot due to the following reasons:**

Until the implementation of the Proposal Phase, all suggestions from the EmPaci team were fully implemented. Unfortunately, after the Proposal Phase, the implementation of the entire PB implementation project in the Gatchina Municipal District was terminated.

**20. The following documents, manuals, regulations were developed and used during the development of the PB process:**

- The PB Concept,
- Terms of reference for expanding the functionality of the web portal Active Citizen

### 3. Implementation of the 1<sup>st</sup> PB pilot

**21. These are the general steps of the PB process after final approval:**

1. Information phase
2. Proposal phase
3. Discussion phase
4. Voting phase
5. Implementation phase
6. Operational phase

**21a. Total annual PB budget** 280 900,00 EUR<sup>1</sup>

**21b. Annual PB budget per citizen:** 1,17 EUR

**21c. If applicable, budget earmarked for related internal work, communications etc.:**

Volunteer work. Methodological and organizational support is carried out from the EmPaci project

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<sup>1</sup> 25 000 000,00 RUB, Exchange rate: 1 EUR = 89.00 RUB

**21d. The PB has been designed as direct democratic tool (citizens' vote = final decision):**

☐ Yes ☒ No

The results of citizens' voting are taken into account by the Council when making its decisions. Decisions of the Council, formalized in the form of Decree, are obligatory for implementing by the Administration of the municipality.

**21e. The PB is designed for**

☐ Region/City projects only ☒ District projects only ☐ Both

**21f. Persons eligible participating in the PB:**

Age limits: 18 and older

Definition of persons: residents only

Number of persons (in total): 241 134 (total population of the district)

Number of person (% of citizens): 80,8%

**21g. The following actions were taken to ensure that only eligible persons made proposals / voted:**

All proposals were accepted only through the Active Citizen web portal. To ensure the reliable involvement of only legitimate persons on the Active Citizen web portal, it was planned to connect to the nationwide Unified Identification and Authorization System (UIAS) used by the federal portal of electronic public services. This service provides a level of citizen recognition authenticity sufficient to obtain any state service. A full connection to UAIS requires a tested application system. Therefore, in the first PB cycle, it was decided to carry out a simplified authorization system using self-identification of a citizen and subsequent random verification of his legitimacy by the staff of the Administration of the municipality.

**22. These were the specific dates planned for the PB process after final approval of the PB development:**

- June 2020 - Launch of web portal Active Citizen (which will be improved to support PB processes in July-August 2020).
- September 2020 - Informing citizens about the beginning of the first PB cycle and starting the submission of proposals through publications on social networks, the official website of the administration, a local newspaper.
- October 2020 - Preliminary feasibility assessment of submitted proposals and public discussion on proposals that have passed the feasibility check.
- December 2020 - Rating voting and selection of proposals for their implementation in 2021.

**23. These amendments were made to the plan due to the COVID-19 pandemic:**

The most significant restriction in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic is the limitation on the number of participants in meetings. This led to the predominant use of remote discussion and voting methods.

**24. For citizen involvement in the PB-phases (e.g. information, proposal, co-creation, voting phase), the following steps were taken and events organized:**

#### Information phase: June-August 2020

Publication on the ITMO University website

- 19 November 2019 - <https://news.itmo.ru/ru/news/8958/>

Publication in the municipal newspaper Gatchinskaya Pravda (paper and online):

- 4 June 2020 - <https://gtm-pravda.ru/2020/06/04/v-gatchine-zarabotal-aktivniy-gorozhanin.html>

#### Proposal phase: September-October 2020

Publication on the official website of the Administration of the Gatchina Municipal District:

- 10 September 2020 - <http://radm.gtm.ru/events/news/?id=8126>

Strategic session "Smart City: Partnership for Development" 10:00-16:00 in person. The event was hosted by RANEPa, and the EmPaci project partners held a 1.5-hour session "Smart City for Citizens", where they discussed citizen engagement in the form of PB. 40 participants.

**Discussion phase:** October - November 2020 - Not carried out

**Voting phase:** December 2020 - Not carried out

**Implementation phase:** Jan-August 2021 - Not carried out

**25. For the activation of specific target groups of the PB, the following steps were taken and events organized: -**

**25a. For the activation of women into the PB, the following steps were taken and events organized:**

On the whole, there was a good attendance at the events for this target group; special measures to involve women are not required due to their traditionally high activity. (The ratio of initiatives submitted by men / women - 35% / 65%; Participation of men / women in face-to-face event – 50% / 50%)

**26. The following actions were taken to provide information about PB in a citizen-friendly manner:**

The most familiar and citizen-friendly channel of information is the free municipal newspaper Gatchinskaya Pravda (paper and online <https://gtm-pravda.ru/>), which reaches almost all households in the municipality. Regular updates of the official website of the administration and publications on the social network are inferior in popularity and efficiency to the newspaper.

**27. The following actions were especially taken to achieve a high participation rate:**

The use of the municipal newspaper as the main communication channel led to the emergence of a sufficient number submitted proposals (98 submitted project ideas), in the opinion of the municipal Administration. The administration perceived the first cycle as a trial one and did not want to involve a large number of citizens for fear of their negative reaction in case of any problems. Therefore, no additional effort was made to attract more residents.

**28. The following steps were taken to train the own actors for PB:**

Each of the 21 one working meetings held in January-December 2020 contained presentations by the Project Partners and invited experts from the European University and RANEPa on general concepts and individual problems and results of PB implementation in different regions and countries. This was part of a custom-tailored educational program planned and agreed with the Administration.

Other special trainings were not organized due to COVID-19 restrictions.

**29. If applicable, the following steps were taken to train actors in other municipalities (outside EmPaci-project):**

The experience and specific knowledge gained by the project partners in Gatchina were used in the implementation of works in other pilot municipalities. In the future, this experience will be systematized, described and will be disseminated both within the framework of the EmPaci project, and between the extensive professional contacts of the Russian partners of the project.

## 4. Results of 1st PB pilot

**Proposal phase****31. The PB was limited to certain areas of the budget or priorities of programmes only:**

☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes: The powers of municipal self-government in Gatchina are legally limited only by issues of improvement of the inner-city territory, day-to-day maintenance of houses and holding mass cultural events for residents. All engineering networks, roads, home renovations, education, health care, forest and agricultural land and much more are outside the scope of the municipal government.

**31a. Proposals and votes were limited to the following areas / priorities:****Two steps:****Information and Proposal phases:**

Citizens are invited to submit proposals limited by the boundaries of the Gatchina municipal district on the improvement of any urban territories.

### Discussion and subsequent phases:

Co-design, discussion and voting on filling the selected territory with objects of various functional purposes are carried out in relation to only the selected territory.

### 32a. The proposal phase was implemented in the following way:

The announcement of the start of the proposals phase was published in the municipal newspaper Gatchinskaya Pravda (paper and online <https://gtm-pravda.ru/>).

The only channel for submitting proposals was the Active Citizen web portal (<https://gtm.mycity365.ru/>).

In accordance with requirement of the 131 Federal Law and amendments adopted on July 21, 2020, a proposal submitted by at least 10 applicants may be accepted for consideration by the municipal Administration. To ensure compliance with the requirements of this law, the following procedure was developed and implemented:

- 1) After self-identification and authorization on the web portal, citizens could submit an offer by filling out a standard form containing:
  - Name of the initiative
  - Address (coordinates) of the implementation of the initiative
  - Brief description of the content of the initiative
  - Arguments in favour of the initiative (description of the reasons and expected benefits)
  - Estimated cost of implementing the initiative
  - Desired timeframe for the implementation of the initiative
  - Attached files with additional information
- 2) After submitting the completed proposal form, the citizen on the screen saw the message "Your proposal has been successfully submitted and published in the closed part of the portal at a unique address (<https://gtm.mycity365.ru/??????>). For its open publication and consideration by the Administration, you must send this unique address to your friends and neighbours in order for their approval of its publication".
- 3) Further processing of this proposal will be carried out only after 10 or more authorized citizens visit the page with the proposal and express their consent to its publishing by clicking on the "Agree" button.
- 4) After a proposal has received 10 or more approvals, it is posted on the open submitted proposal page for:
  - pre-moderation by the Administration staff
  - a feasibility study by experts designated by the Administration
  - public discussion and further voting

**32b. Number of citizens participating:** The exact number of participants is unknown due to the possibility of their repetitions when counting approvals and total number of visits (98 submitted proposals, from 108 to 980 or more visitors of closed pages who approved its publication and acceptance for processing, 2 573 unique users of the web portal registered in the period June-December 2020 (1,3% of adult residents))

**32c. Participation rate (% of citizens):** 1,3%

**32d. Number of proposals received in total:** 98

**32e. Main categories of proposals:**

- |                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| – Repair of house facades          | 30% |
| – Creation of car parks            | 11% |
| – Landscaping of territories       | 9%  |
| – Improved cleaning of territories | 7%  |
| – Arrangement of playgrounds       | 3%  |
| – Other                            | 40% |

**32f. Information provided to citizens after completion of the proposal phase:**

In December 2020, the administration of the municipality lost interest in introducing PB and all project and PB activities was stopped. No information was published on the results of the submission of proposals. All functions of the web portal developed within the framework of the PB implementation project were cleaned up (only the functions of conducting surveys and publishing information about projects implemented by the Administration remained). One of the most significant reasons for stopping the project could be the following: The Leningrad Region in December 2020 introduced the "Platform for Feedback and Communication with Citizens", which is part of the all-Russian federal project. All municipalities of the Leningrad Region are encouraged to use this platform to receive all applications from citizens. In this situation, the Administration of Gatchina believes that further development of the Active Citizen web portal is inappropriate.

**Feasibility check:****33a. A feasibility check of proposals or voted projects was implemented:**

☒ No Feasibility assessment of proposals was planned but not executed due to the unplanned cancellation of the project.

**33b. The feasibility check was implemented in the following way:**

The feasibility check was planned for implementation as follows:

- Compliance with the powers of the local government and the territory of the municipality – by municipality clerks
- The absence of obvious contradictions with the interests of the majority of residents - Council
- Technical feasibility - architects and engineers invited by the Administration and EmPaci Project Partners
- Financial feasibility - financial department of the municipality and the Deputy Head of the municipality.

**33c. If applicable, political decision-makers were involved in the feasibility check in the following way:**

Political decision-makers were not planned to be involved in the feasibility check

**33d. If applicable, citizens making specific proposals were involved in the following way:**

Involvement of citizens was not planned

**33e. The difficulties that became apparent through the feasibility check:**

No difficulties planned.



**33f. As a result of the feasibility check, the PB process should be changed as follows:**

It was planned to discard proposals that did not pass any of the feasibility checks and inform the authors about this fact.

**33g. Ratio of ideas given vrs. plans that make it to voting stage:**

N/A

**Voting phase:****34a. The voting phase was implemented in the following way:**

Voting phase was planned, but not executed due to the unplanned cancellation of the project.

**34b. Each citizen was given the following number of votes:**

1 vote per a representative;

**34c. Number of citizens voting:** N/A**34d. Participation rate (% of citizens):** N/A**34e. Number of votes received in total:** N/A**34f. Results of the votes (which projects with which amounts and votes were winning):** N/A.**34g. Total PB budget realized / implemented:** N/A**34h. Was part of the total PB budget unused?**

- ☐ No    ☒ Yes, unused    The PB budget is not used at all
- ☐ Yes, otherwise designated

**If yes, why was part of the budget unused?** The budget was not used at all due to the unplanned cancellation of the project

**34i. Information provided to citizens after completion of the voting phase:**

Citizens were not informed about the results due to the unplanned cancellation of the project

**34j. Extent to which the approved projects can be realized:**

Projects were not approved and will not be released due to the unplanned project cancellation

**34k. Timeframe planned to realize the approved projects:**

Projects were not approved and will not be released due to the unplanned project cancellation

**34l. Extent to which citizens were involved in the realization of the approved projects:** N/A.**35. Citizens were informed about the completion of the 1<sup>st</sup> PB pilot in the following ways:** N/A.**36. Other actors involved (e.g. local council) were informed about the completion of the 1st PB pilot in the following ways:**

The PB implementation project was unexpectedly cancelled by the Administration of the Gatchina Municipal District, but none of the involved parties were officially notified of this fact.

## 5. Assessment of 1<sup>st</sup> PB pilot and enhancement for 2<sup>nd</sup> PB pilot

### 37. Objectives for PB as specified in Question 9 were reached as follows:

None of the planned PB objectives were achieved due to the unplanned cancellation of the project.

**38. Besides the objectives for PB as specified in Question 9, the following additional issues can be seen as a success for the PB pilot:** There was no success.

### 39. Some objectives for PB as specified in Question 9 were not reached due to the following reasons:

The objectives were not achieved due to the unplanned cancellation of the project.

### 40. To our knowledge, the following elements of the PB process are innovative compared to other PB initiatives in the BSR:

The requirement of the legislation on the adoption by the Administration of the municipality for consideration of proposals submitted on behalf of at least 10 citizens was fully satisfied through the design and implementation of the procedure, algorithm and related software on the Active Citizen web portal.

The created organizational and software solution can be successfully applied in other municipalities. Even if the law does not require it, such a solution involving several authorized citizens in the proposal submission process reduces the need for moderation of the submitted proposals.

### 41. The PB benefitted from the transnational approach of the EmPaci project in the following way:

The Administration and the other project participants began to better understand the purpose and content of the processes. Unfortunately, the priorities of the Administration did not coincide sufficiently with the purpose of the PB processes.

### 42. These changes are already planned for the 2<sup>nd</sup> PB pilot to better reach objectives of PB:

The second pilot will be implemented in another municipality of the Leningrad Region (Sverdlov Urban Settlement of the Vsevolozhsk Municipal District of the Leningrad Region), which will be selected based on the criterion of the highest motivation of the Council and the Administration in obtaining specific benefits from the implementation of PB processes.

### 43. These changes are already planned for the 2<sup>nd</sup> PB pilot to better involve target groups:

First of all, it is planned to use a larger number of communication tools to involve target groups of citizens who are accustomed to using specific channels.

Also, it is necessary to involve sociologists and professional copywriters to write short but effective information materials that attract and motivate citizens to participate in PB processes.

## 6. Lessons learnt from the interruption of the PB process

Since the pilot PB implementation in Gatchina was prematurely interrupted at the initiative of the Administration, generalization and consideration of the experience gained from this case is extremely important to ensure the success of other pilots.

Some of the most important lessons from a project perspective include:

### **Selection of a pilot municipality**

One of the most important criteria for choosing a pilot municipality should be the presence of strong motivation of the Administration to implement PB and its high priority in the list of its strategic tasks.

In the case of Gatchina, a higher priority was the relocation of the capital's functions and organizational structures of the Administration of the Leningrad Region from St. Petersburg to Gatchina, scheduled for 2021 (we could have foreseen this factor, but did not take into account). Also, a higher priority was given to the newly emerging task of introducing a federal "Platform for Feedback and Communication with Citizens", which became a direct competitor to the PB processes and tools supported by the EmPaci Project. (we could not foresee this new task imposed by the Administration of the Russian Federation).

These two negatively influencing factors were superimposed on the low motivation for the introduction of PB, common for all Russian municipalities, due to the absence of legislative requirements and a general decrease in democratization with increased centralization of power.

The main takeaways from this lesson are the understanding of the need to be more attentive to the personal preferences and priorities of the heads of municipal administrations, as well as to provide additional motivation through administrative support from higher authorities.

### **Building working communications with the Administration and the Council of the municipality**

The main communication tools were regular workshops and e-mail correspondence on project issues. Experience has shown that such communications are not enough, since many news and events important for the project were not mentioned in these meetings and correspondence.

A useful lesson is the need for project team members to participate in higher-level meetings where strategic plans for the municipality's development are discussed and, inter alia, to ensure that PB is part of these plans.

### **Consideration of ALL stakeholders' motivations**

The initiating documents listed all the stakeholders of the PB implementation project, but their consideration was disproportionate:

- The Administration's strongest motivator was the desire to use the PB processes to obtain additional budget funding from external sources (for example, as a result of winning the "Formation of a comfortable urban environment" investment project competition, which requires citizens to be involved in the process of generating investment ideas).
- There was practically no motivation from the City Council to implement PB.
- The motivation of citizens to participate in PB processes was high, but at the first stages of the pilot, it was practically not used by the project team.

Conclusion: To increase the likelihood of successful PB implementation, a more balanced cooperation with all stakeholders is required. In particular, such cooperation is necessary to ensure the sufficient pressure of the most motivated stakeholders on the less motivated ones.

## Involvement of external experts in the development of the PB Concept and its implementation

Many of the reputable experts involved were inflexible and suggested PB Concepts and methods that were not applicable in a particular municipality.

The lessons learned show that the involvement of external experts is extremely useful to familiarize municipal Administrations and residents with a wide range of international and national experience in the PB implementation and use for obtaining a variety of social and economic benefits. Further, the design and implementation of the PB Concept should be carried out by the municipal employees themselves, and the participation of experts should be limited to advice and warnings.

Considering all of the above key lessons learned, the next pilots should reallocate efforts and resources in favour of more active engagement with citizens as the most interested and motivated beneficiaries of PB. Active citizens' support will allow to exert a proper influence on municipal administrations, which will increase their motivation to meet the citizens' request for the introduction and active use of PB and, therefore, increase the likelihood of successful PB implementation.

## Summary of lessons learnt

The experience of interaction with the pilot municipality of Gatchina allows us to formulate the following lessons, which will be useful to take into account in other municipalities introducing participatory budgeting:

1. Change of the head of the municipality is a reason to revise the project up to the refusal to implement it. However, if the project continues, a complete reassessment of management risks is clearly required. In Gatchina, the change of the head of the municipality, while keeping his deputy loyal to the project, did not allow the project to be implemented in its original form since the balance of interests had already been violated, and part of the team had changed. For example, the chairman of the town planning committee, whose powers were to involve citizens in decision-making, left her post immediately after the change of the head of the municipality, creating a potential for conflict and rejection of participatory budgeting by the new head of the municipality. Therefore, future PB projects need a broad political consensus and stable processes (including absence of fluctuations of key personal). Also, a first PB should not be planned for periods overlapping municipal elections. Also, it seems useful even earlier to seek for active and widespread informing and involvement of residents in the PB design processes from the very beginning in order to increase their interest and activity. This would make it difficult to wind down the PB implementation project in the case of a change of key administrative persons or loss of their interest in PB.
2. The actions of the federal government in the field of citizen engagement are also a reason for an urgent revision of the goals, objectives and risks of the project. In Gatchina, the following resulted in fatal consequences for the project: First, a new federal law on proactive budgeting was adopted, which established a strict formal framework and actually banned the existing and previously planned practices of participatory budgeting. Municipal officials became afraid of breaking the law and lost interest in the local project. Secondly, federal agencies (the Ministry of Digital Development and the Ministry of Construction), despite the fact that since 2019 they have demanded that pilot smart cities (including Gatchina) develop electronic platforms for engagement ("Active Citizen"), in 2021 they

themselves began to develop similar systems while competing with each other (the "Feedback Platform" (POS) system associated with the portal of public services and a similar platform of the Ministry of Construction). Thus, in the case of the Active Citizen of Gatchina, the efforts to develop the concept and terms of reference for the Initiative Budgeting module were wasted, since in the end it was decided to focus on federal platforms. Therefore, future PB projects need to assess and monitor not only the municipal circumstances, but also relevant developments on state or national level. For early warning of upcoming radical regulatory and organizational changes, it is necessary to include representatives of the federal authorities in the PB project's key stakeholders and plan regular communications with them in such a way as to receive their support and information about the upcoming changes as soon as possible.

3. The development and timely revision of a communication strategy with key stakeholders is imperative. The complexity of the networking, which involves the performers of the work to create the organizational and software solutions necessary to achieve the goals of the project, can slow down or make it impossible to implement the project. In Gatchina, the development team of the Active Citizen system, instead of starting the development of the initiative budgeting module, tried for too long to correlate the risks and benefits associated with the closure of the existing contract and the warranty, which ultimately led to the termination of development due to the switch to the POS platform. Therefore, future PB projects need a quick start, platforms should be (nearly) ready at the beginning or existing platforms should be used. Technical hindrances should be avoided. The use of off-the-shelf and standard tools is preferable despite their limited availability and lack of functionality. A good solution to this problem can be the use of social networks already actively used by residents. In any case, within the framework of the PB implementation project, organizational and regulatory solutions should be created that provide for the presence of roles and responsibilities for regular and intensive interaction with residents through the selected tool.

