



CORRUPTION
RESEARCH CENTER
BUDAPEST

Transparency and Integrity: The Online Presence of Hungarian Municipalities

Analysis of urban municipalities' websites in Hungary - 2018

Budapest, January 2019

The Corruption Research Center Budapest was created in November 2013 in response to the growing need for independent research on corruption and quality of government in Hungary. Hence, the Center was established as a non-partisan think tank independent of governments, political parties or special interest groups. The aims of the Center are to systematically explore the causes, characteristics, and consequences of quality of government, problems of corruption, and regulatory failures using an inter-disciplinary approach. The Center also aims to help citizens to hold governments accountable through the use of empirical evidence.

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1. Introduction

The transparency of the operation of the local governments and the follow-up of their decision-making process by the citizens are very important to achieve good governance. It is vital that citizens should easily access the data concerning the decisions made by their local governments, the background studies, and the preparatory reports for the decisions and concepts.

In addition, responsibility is also crucial at the political and professional decisions made by the local governments. Not only are the publication of the following year's budget or data on public procurement decisions relevant, or, whether the citizens can find them on the website, but also whether these documents indicate or not the name of their authors or decision-makers. It is not only important whether the data concerning the budget or public procurements appear on the local governments' websites, but also whether the decision-makers "give their face" to these decisions, and the citizens could reach the decision-makers through the local government websites.

The joint project of CRCB and Budapest Institute supported by the Open Society Foundations focuses on these important issues. The present study summarizes the results of a part of this project: a content analysis of town websites of the Hungarian towns investigating their transparency. As in the 21st century the internet has become the most commonly used means of communication among individuals, particularly, as a means to search for information about politics, what a local government uploads to its website says a lot about its quality. If a government functions well – so they have nothing to hide – then every important piece of information will be on its homepage.

2. Data

The paper is based on a database which was built between January and March 2018. In constructing the coding instruction for the research, we followed the same approach used in the 2013¹ and 2015² report on the quality of the websites of the Hungarian cities. Accordingly, we analysed 368 websites of different Hungarian municipalities: from these 23 are capital's districts, 24 are county towns³ and the other 321 are cities.

3. Transparency of Hungarian Municipalities – Representative Body and Committees

3.1. Minutes of the Representative Body meetings

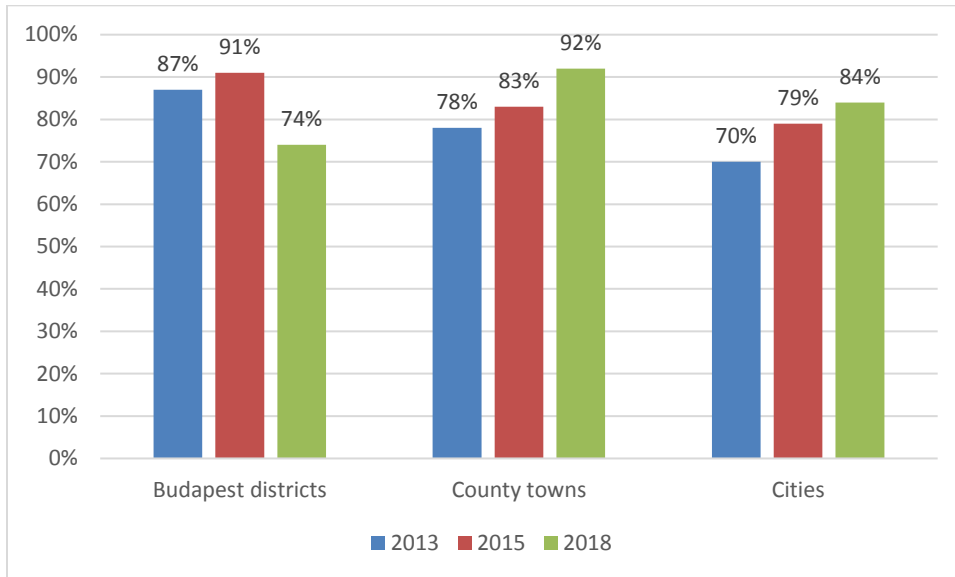
Citizens have the right to be informed about the activities of municipality, and the local government have to inform them about its own activities. The extent of information can be an indicator of transparency. If citizens cannot get enough information about the operation of the municipality, they are entitled to believe that fraudulent activities are pursued. The municipality can provide information by the minutes. For this reason, we looked at what the oldest and the most recent minutes are. We compute how many minutes are uploaded to the website between January 2012 and September 2015. The number of such documents is considered annually for this purpose. The figure 2.1.1. shows the percentage ratio of the availability of minutes.

¹ http://www.crcb.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/onk_honlapok_2013_riport_140808.pdf

² http://www.crcb.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/crcb_2017_mrsrpghnm_paper_180319_.pdf

³ We have to note what we call county town (in Hungarian: megyei jogú város). In this study we use this term to those cities that have special rights in Hungary. These rights are defined by the following law: 2011/CLXXXIX. Legislation about the Local Councils in Hungary.

**Figure 3.1.1.: “Does the minutes of the Representative Body are available on the website?”
Available minutes of the Representative Body in percent**



Source: Corruption Research Center Budapest (N=368)

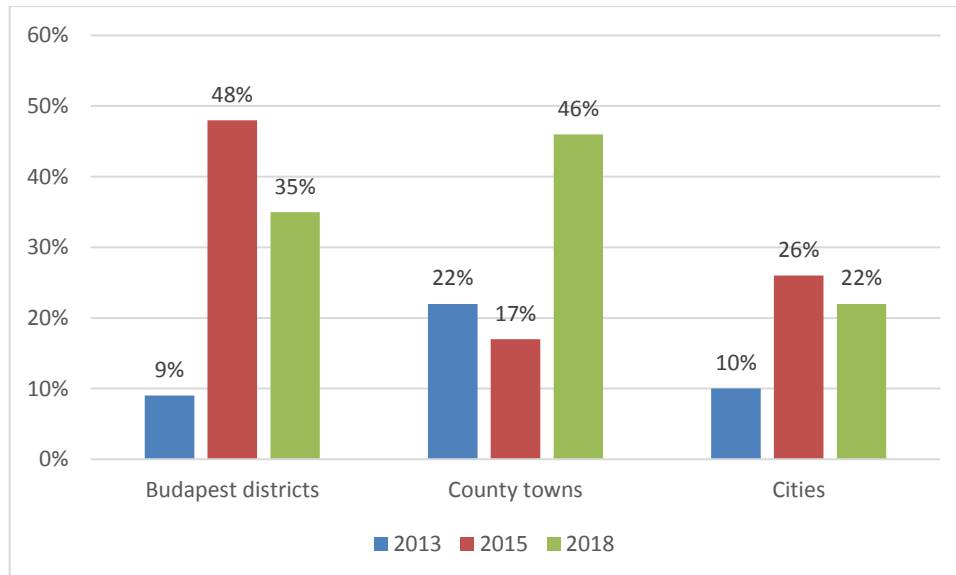
In Figure 3.1.1., it clearly shows that the municipalities in the Budapest’s districts in 2015 made public the minutes at the highest percentage at 91%, which decreased to 74% in 2018. As for county towns this ratio increased from 83% to 92%, and finally there was a considerable improvement of 5 percentage points within the cities too. It can be clearly seen that the county towns and cities improved constantly since 2013 from this point of view, however, there was a big relapse among the districts of Budapest in the last three years.

3.2. A preliminary agenda of the Representative Board meetings

In Hungary, the municipalities have to publish the agenda of the next meeting of the Representative Body, what is regulated by the law. Nevertheless, we can find the agenda at only 90 websites out of 368. On the whole, it is only 24% of Hungarian municipality, which respect the law and more than the 75% of the municipalities do not comply with the law. This phenomenon is new, as we could observe 99 websites in 2015 with such agendas published. However, instead of observing development regarding this characteristic, we faced with a worsening tendency.

In addition, beyond the legal requirements, we consider this to be an important weakness of the governance of Hungarian municipalities, because when the citizens are informed about the next meetings' topics, then they can decide whether they want to attend the meetings or not.

Figure 3.2.1.: "Are the agenda of the next Representative Body meeting available on the website?" available agenda of next meeting in percent



Source: Corruption Research Center Budapest, (N=368)

The Figure 3.2.1. shows that there was a notable improvement between 2015 and 2018 in the case of the county towns from this perspective, as the ratio of homepage with the next meeting's agenda increased from 17% to 46%. Though, there was a minor decrease (4 percentage points) among the cities and a major reduction happened within the districts of Budapest (13 percentage points).

From the results, it is clear that the Hungarian municipalities simply do not provide the possibility for citizens to get information about these agenda items, which are discussed in board meetings. In addition, unfortunate tendencies can be revealed from this point of view because of the lack of development. Both the lack of information and transparency, deprive the possibility of freedom of citizens to be informed about the activity of their municipalities; in the absence of agendas, and so the Hungarian citizens cannot decide whether they want to participate in the next meeting or not.

3.3. Minutes of committee meetings and preliminary agendas

Despite the fact that there is no legislation for committee meetings, we consider it to be important to examine them, as the committees discuss the questions in details and perform the practical job. In 2018, 28% of the municipalities uploaded the minutes of committee meetings on their website – this ratio was 26% in 2015.

We also examined whether the next Committees' meetings' agenda can be accessed on the websites. As a result, we found that only 10% (this ratio was 11% in 2015) of the cities upload the agenda before the meeting.

We can conclude there was basically no change in the accessibility of information about committee meetings on the municipalities' websites.

4. Municipality Openness Index (MOPI)

The Municipality Openness Index (MOPI) was made for the measurement of the transparency of the governmental websites. We focused on the citizens who want to obtain information about the work of the municipalities, their plans and decisions, and who intent to participate in the open meetings, so the following questions were taken into consideration:

- Can we reach the website in any other language than Hungarian?
- Is there a web map on the website?
- Is there a search engine on the website?
- Are there any public procurement contracts on the web site?
- Are there annual plans for the public procurement?
- Are there annual summaries for the public procurement?
- Can we reach the preliminary agenda of the next Representative Body meeting?
- Can we reach the minutes of the Representative Body meetings?
- Can we reach the preliminary agenda of the next Financial Body meeting?

- Can we reach the minutes of the Financial Body meetings?
- Is there any information about project financed by the EU on the website?
- Are there any aggregate tables about the not normative subsidies?
- Are there any aggregate tables about public procurement, the investments, the service orders, the property sales, the transfer of property rights or about the concessions?
- Are there any calls for tender for public procurement, service orders, rents or real estate sales?
- Is there any information on the webpage on the regulation for the public procurement under the threshold?

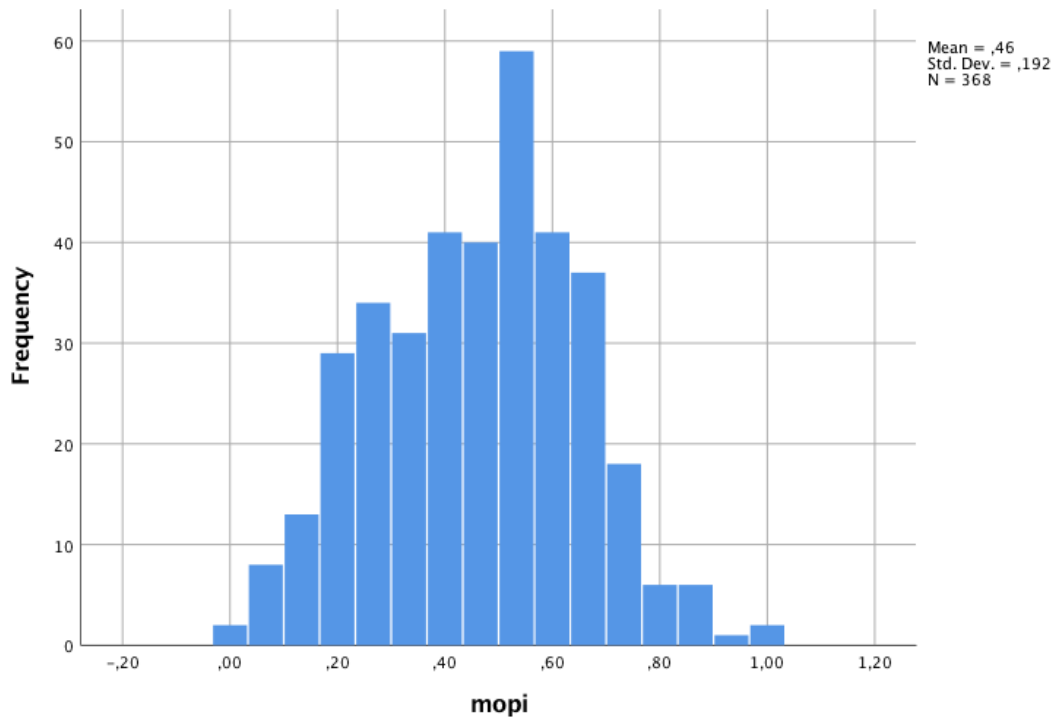
From these questions we created 15 elementary indicators, $mopij$ where j stands for the number of considered questions. Each of the 15 indicators could take two values [0,1]. Zero, if the webpage did not give any information concerning the given question, and one, if the given information was available concerning the given question.

Following this, we created the Municipality Openness Index (MOPI), which is the average of the value of elementary indicators $mopij$, i.e. it can take a value between 0 and 1. It is 0 – if we could not find any information we had looked for with none of the questions examined, and 1 – if we could find all the information we needed with all the topics in the considered questions. Thus, the definition of the MOPI is the following:

$$MOPI = \sum_{j=1}^{15} \frac{mopij}{15}$$

The Figure 4.1.1. shows the results, the distribution of analysed municipalities by the value of MOPI.

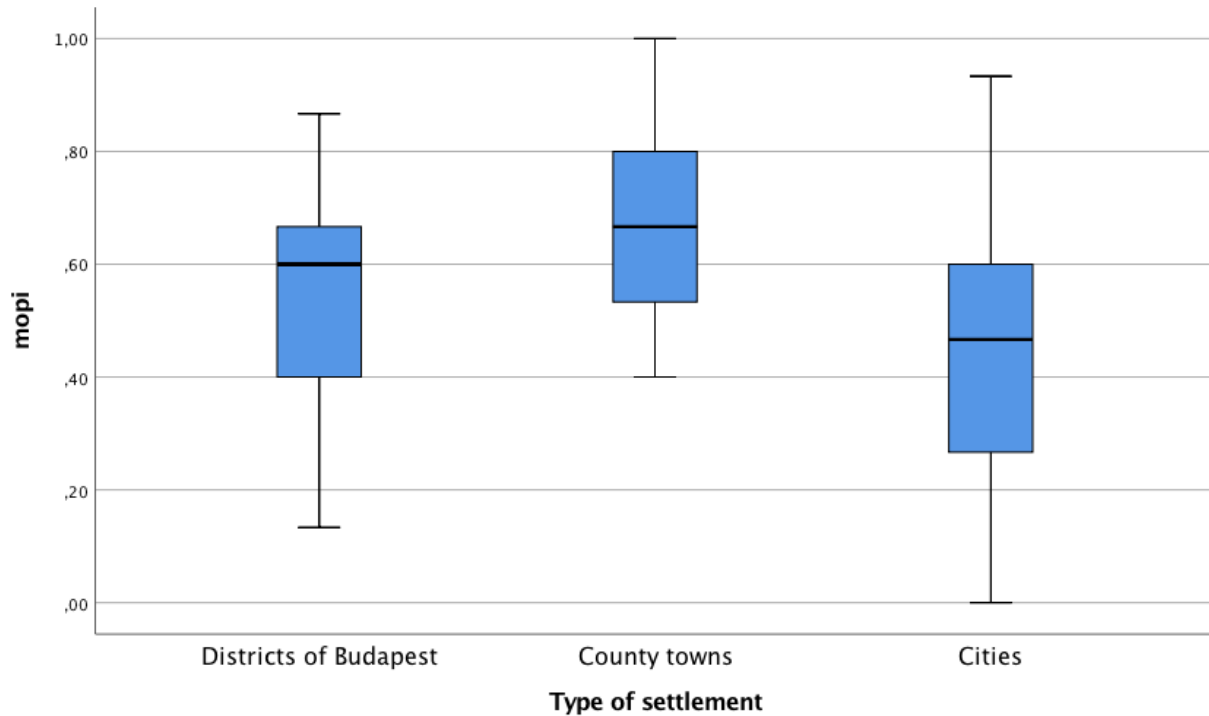
Figure 4.1.1: The distribution of Hungarian Municipalities by MOPI in 2018



Source: Corruption Research Center Budapest, (N=368)

The average value of the MOPI was 0.46 in 2018, which is higher than in 2013, when the average was 0.44 and than in 2015 (0.45). The empirical minimum of the MOPI was 0 and the maximum was 1. The average values are quite different in the capital, the county towns and in the other town. We got the highest one from the county towns data (0.68), the second highest at Budapest (0.55) and the lowest at the other towns (0.44). The next figure (Figure 4.1.2.) shows this result.

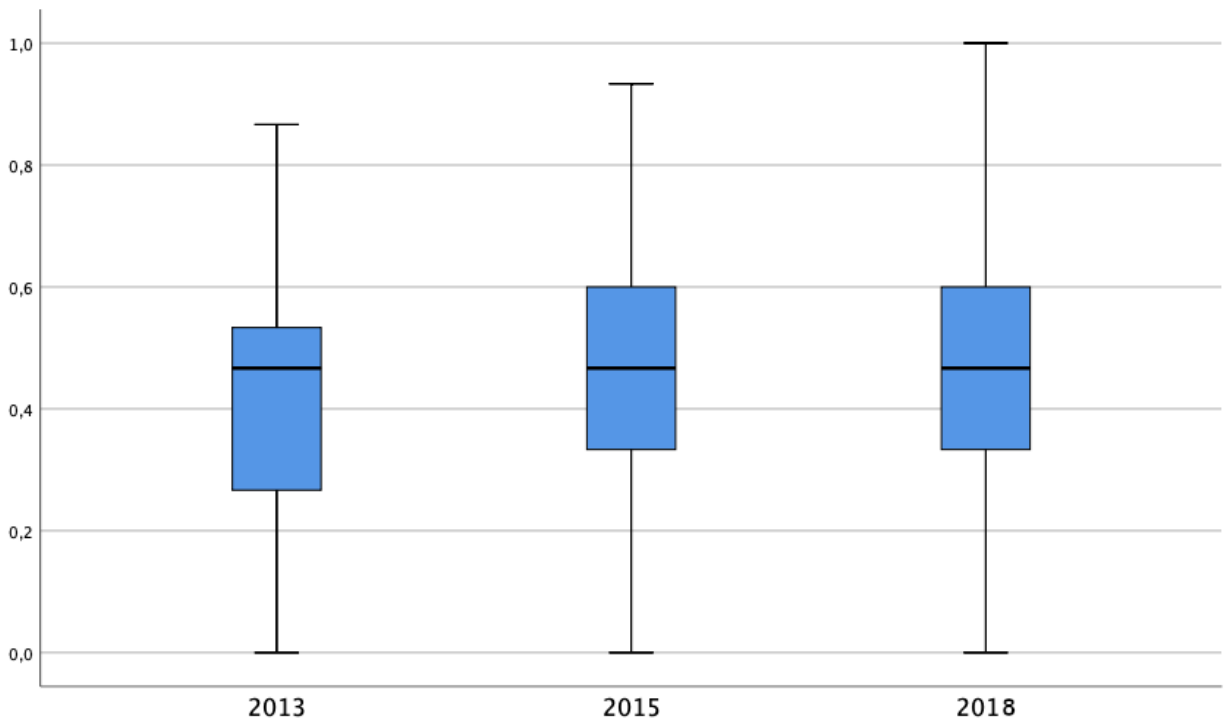
Figure 4.1.2: The boxplot of Hungarian Municipalities by MOPI in 2018



Source: Corruption Research Center Budapest, (N=368)

All in all, it can be said that there is no significant difference between 2018, 2015 and 2013. The Hungarian local governments have not made major efforts to ensure that their work or/and their decisions can be reach on the Internet (see Figure 4.1.3.). For the list of local governments with their latest MOPI scores, see Table A1. in the Appendix.

Figure 4.1.3: The boxplot of Hungarian Municipalities by MOPI in 2013, 2015 and 2018



Source: Corruption Research Center Budapest, (N=368)

Appendix

Table A1: Ranking of urban municipalities' websites in Hungary – 2018

#	Name	HCSO ID	Municipality Openness Index
1	Pécs	19415	1,00
2	Kaposvár	20473	1,00
3	Martfű	2626	0,93
4-9	Dunaújváros	3115	0,87
	Budapest X. kerület	10700	0,87
	Veszprém	11767	0,87
	Mezőkövesd	19433	0,87
	Szekszárd	22761	0,87
	Oroszlány	30766	0,87
10-15	Budapest 02. ker.	3179	0,80
	Hévíz	3814	0,80
	Gyula	5032	0,80
	Sopron	8518	0,80
	Győr	25584	0,80
	Nagykanizsa	30933	0,80
16-33	Szombathely	3009	0,73
	Budapest XIX. kerület	4011	0,73
	Mosonmagyaróvár	4783	0,73
	Dombóvár	7685	0,73
	Cegléd	11341	0,73
	Nagykátá	13435	0,73
	Budapest 11. ker.	14216	0,73
	Ózd	14492	0,73
	Heves	14526	0,73
	Budapest 14. kerület	16337	0,73
	Kőszeg	16832	0,73
	Marcali	18500	0,73
	Mezőberény	19628	0,73
	Orosháza	23065	0,73
	Esztergom	25131	0,73
	Tiszaújváros	28352	0,73
	Miskolc	30456	0,73
	Kistelek	31024	0,73
34-70	Füzesabony	3276	0,67

#	Name	HCSO ID	Municipality Openness Index
	Mórahalom	4349	0,67
	Martonvásár	4659	0,67
	Hajdúszoboszló	5175	0,67
	Budapest 20. ker.	6026	0,67
	Biatorbágy	8891	0,67
	Fertőd	9885	0,67
	Dorog	10490	0,67
	Budapest 15.ker.	11314	0,67
	Budakeszi	12052	0,67
	Budapest 21. ker.	13189	0,67
	Pilisvörösvár	14340	0,67
	Nyírbátor	14845	0,67
	Mélykút	16018	0,67
	Aszód	16188	0,67
	Siófok	17631	0,67
	Veresegyház	18342	0,67
	Keszthely	18421	0,67
	Harkány	21528	0,67
	Budaörs	23278	0,67
	Budapest 13. kerület	24299	0,67
	Kiskunmajsa	24396	0,67
	Vác	24934	0,67
	Zsámbék	25034	0,67
	Vép	26426	0,67
	Kecskemét	26684	0,67
	Szolnok	27854	0,67
	Solt	29115	0,67
	Tapolca	29434	0,67
	Budapest IX. kerület	29586	0,67
	Tököl	29823	0,67
	Répcelak	30881	0,67
	Érd	30988	0,67
	Szentgotthárd	31583	0,67
	Gyomaendrőd	33455	0,67
	Budapest 23. kerület	34139	0,67
	Kistarcsa	34157	0,67
71-111	Balatonfűzfő	2219	0,60
	Pécel	4057	0,60
	Csongrád	5111	0,60

#	Name	HCSO ID	Municipality Openness Index
	Komárom	5449	0,60
	Balatonalmádi	5838	0,60
	Pomáz	6372	0,60
	Kalocsa	6442	0,60
	Törökbálint	6859	0,60
	Pásztó	7409	0,60
	Budapest XVI. kerület	8208	0,60
	Szentes	14456	0,60
	Rakamaz	14739	0,60
	Békéscsaba	15200	0,60
	Újszász	15291	0,60
	Sajószentpéter	16054	0,60
	Budapest VI. kerület	16586	0,60
	Ráckeve	17260	0,60
	Nagyatád	17941	0,60
	Jászberény	18209	0,60
	Bodajk	18254	0,60
	Vásárosnamény	18324	0,60
	Mór	18485	0,60
	Nagykőrös	19716	0,60
	Kecel	19789	0,60
	Tata	20127	0,60
	Hatvan	22309	0,60
	Hajdúnánás	22406	0,60
	Göd	23649	0,60
	Szarvas	23870	0,60
	Déaványa	24819	0,60
	Kisújszállás	25919	0,60
	Szigetvár	26578	0,60
	Kapuvár	28334	0,60
	Hajdósámson	31097	0,60
	Zalaegerszeg	32054	0,60
	Zalaszentgrót	32522	0,60
	Fót	32610	0,60
	Barcs	32799	0,60
	Berhida	33127	0,60
	Balatonboglár	33853	0,60
	Kerepes	34166	0,60
112-170	Bük	2431	0,53

#	Name	HCSO ID	Municipality Openness Index
	Felsőzsolca	2848	0,53
	Balmazújváros	2918	0,53
	Hajdúböszörmény	3045	0,53
	Csorna	4039	0,53
	Emőd	4677	0,53
	Borsodnádásd	5315	0,53
	Budapest 04. ker.	5467	0,53
	Derecske	5573	0,53
	Újhartyán	6293	0,53
	Szécsény	6628	0,53
	Mágocs	6813	0,53
	Piliscsaba	7144	0,53
	Órbottyán	8545	0,53
	Dunaharaszti	9584	0,53
	Békés	9760	0,53
	Pilis	9821	0,53
	Monor	10551	0,53
	Edelény	10728	0,53
	Maglód	10922	0,53
	Mezőkeresztes	11323	0,53
	Várpalota	11439	0,53
	Hajdúdorog	12803	0,53
	Üllő	12894	0,53
	Nagymányok	14030	0,53
	Tótkomlós	16434	0,53
	Nyíregyháza	17206	0,53
	Lajosmizse	17677	0,53
	Tatabánya	18157	0,53
	Tokaj	18306	0,53
	Eger	20491	0,53
	Dunavarsány	20534	0,53
	Simontornya	20783	0,53
	Mindszent	21555	0,53
	Szeghalom	21883	0,53
	Jászárokszállás	22105	0,53
	Badacsonytomaj	22327	0,53
	Onga	22558	0,53
	Polgár	23117	0,53
	Budakalász	23463	0,53
	Sárbogárd	23694	0,53
	Tamási	24563	0,53

#	Name	HCSO ID	Municipality Openness Index
	Budapest XII. kerület	24697	0,53
	Salgótarján	25788	0,53
	Komló	26408	0,53
	Lengyeltóti	26675	0,53
	Celldömök	27094	0,53
	Törökszentmiklós	27313	0,53
	Sárospatak	27474	0,53
	Abony	27872	0,53
	Visegrád	28413	0,53
	Szigetszentmiklós	28954	0,53
	Medgyesegyháza	30128	0,53
	Zalalövő	30313	0,53
	Lőrinci	30401	0,53
	Albertirsa	31653	0,53
	Pápa	31945	0,53
	Devecser	32276	0,53
	Szeged	33367	0,53
171-210	Cigánd	3939	0,47
	Ócsa	4075	0,47
	Mezőtúr	4260	0,47
	Gyöngyös	5236	0,47
	Bonyhád	6497	0,47
	Kazincbarcika	6691	0,47
	Tiszavasvári	7597	0,47
	Dunavecse	7612	0,47
	Kisvárd	9265	0,47
	Püspökladány	10162	0,47
	Budapest 22. ker.	10214	0,47
	Kondoros	10287	0,47
	Bicske	10481	0,47
	Csepreg	12140	0,47
	Körmend	13532	0,47
	Székesfehérvár	14827	0,47
	Szentendre	15440	0,47
	Tiszacsege	15644	0,47
	Kenderes	17145	0,47
	Kisbér	17330	0,47
	Kisköre	18281	0,47
	Mátészalka	18874	0,47
	Kiskunfélegyháza	20297	0,47

#	Name	HCSO ID	Municipality Openness Index
	Sárvár	21306	0,47
	Jászapáti	22202	0,47
	Kunhegyes	22567	0,47
	Jáskisér	22798	0,47
	Herend	23658	0,47
	Rétság	23825	0,47
	Szob	24916	0,47
	Velence	25016	0,47
	Szabadszállás	25061	0,47
	Tolna	25274	0,47
	Újfehértó	26611	0,47
	Vecsés	26815	0,47
	Kunszentmiklós	28130	0,47
	Sellye	28741	0,47
	Jánossomorja	29221	0,47
	Tiszafüred	29726	0,47
	Sásd	32160	0,47
211-251	Budapest 17. ker.	2112	0,40
	Baja	3522	0,40
	Vasvár	4695	0,40
	Paks	4862	0,40
	Karcag	4923	0,40
	Sátoraljaújhely	5120	0,40
	Siklós	5519	0,40
	Létavértes	5768	0,40
	Balatonföldvár	7117	0,40
	Makó	7357	0,40
	Isaszeg	7807	0,40
	Hódmezővásárhely	8314	0,40
	Tát	8758	0,40
	Dabas	9247	0,40
	Jánoshalma	9469	0,40
	Igal	11192	0,40
	Mezőhegyes	11873	0,40
	Nyírmada	12274	0,40
	Lenti	12575	0,40
	Berettyóújfalu	12788	0,40
	Balassagyarmat	13657	0,40
	Debrecen	15130	0,40
	Fertőszentmiklós	15343	0,40
	Záhony	16203	0,40

#	Name	HCSO ID	Municipality Openness Index
	Polgárdi	17525	0,40
	Dunakeszi	18616	0,40
	Szikszó	21351	0,40
	Kerekegyháza	22530	0,40
	Jászfényszaru	23339	0,40
	Tiszalök	23524	0,40
	Zirc	26499	0,40
	Csorvás	26709	0,40
	Nádudvar	28103	0,40
	Tompa	28486	0,40
	Budapest 18. ker.	29285	0,40
	Gyömrő	29735	0,40
	Nagymaros	31732	0,40
	Kunszentmárton	32504	0,40
	Gödöllő	32559	0,40
	Lébény	33668	0,40
	Balatonlelle	33862	0,40
252-282	Kaba	2307	0,33
	Sajóbábony	3504	0,33
	Csanádpalota	5379	0,33
	Nyíradony	6187	0,33
	Kozármisleny	6336	0,33
	Nagyecsed	6488	0,33
	Adony	8925	0,33
	Halásztelek	9690	0,33
	Gárdony	10296	0,33
	Hajdúhadház	10393	0,33
	Pétervására	12070	0,33
	Abádszalók	12441	0,33
	Szigethalom	13277	0,33
	Tápiószele	14146	0,33
	Nyergesújfalu	15352	0,33
	Százhalombatta	17312	0,33
	Fehérgyarmat	18971	0,33
	Tét	19035	0,33
	Balatonfüred.hu	21175	0,33
	Sülysáp	21713	0,33
	Izsák	21999	0,33
	Ercsi	23603	0,33
	Verpelét	24147	0,33
	Sümege	25593	0,33

#	Name	HCSO ID	Municipality Openness Index
	Sarkad	28565	0,33
	Vésztő	29531	0,33
	Budapest 07. ker.	29744	0,33
	Szerencs	30739	0,33
	Sándorfalva	31705	0,33
	Encs	33048	0,33
	Bélapátfalva	33260	0,33
283-316	Komádi	2167	0,27
	Enying	2802	0,27
	Ács	4428	0,27
	Balatonkenese	5148	0,27
	Ajka	6673	0,27
	Szendrő	8077	0,27
	Ajak	8776	0,27
	Tura	9593	0,27
	Besenyszög	11305	0,27
	Jánosháza	11679	0,27
	Letenye	12122	0,27
	Nyékládháza	12885	0,27
	Budapest V. kerület	13392	0,27
	Nyírtelek	13550	0,27
	Dombrád	14508	0,27
	Mándok	17826	0,27
	Battonya	18102	0,27
	Vaja	18591	0,27
	Máriapócs	19655	0,27
	Csurgó	21315	0,27
	Nagybajom	21652	0,27
	Rudabánya	23029	0,27
	Diósd	24013	0,27
	Pannonhalma	24305	0,27
	Budapest 08. ker.	25405	0,27
	Putnok	27410	0,27
	Villány	28024	0,27
	Pusztaszabolcs	29018	0,27
	Gyönk	30289	0,27
	Mezőkovácsháza	30322	0,27
	Tiszakécske	30623	0,27
	Pacsa	31741	0,27
	Kiskunhalas	32434	0,27

#	Name	HCSO ID	Municipality Openness Index
317-345	Bóly	33154	0,27
	Örkény	5281	0,20
	Gyöngyöspata	8323	0,20
	Tab	8590	0,20
	Bátaszék	8864	0,20
	Vámospércs	8989	0,20
	Budapest 01. ker.	9566	0,20
	Rácalmás	9900	0,20
	Beled	10588	0,20
	Óriszentpéter	10630	0,20
	Bácsalmás	10719	0,20
	Pécsvárad	10825	0,20
	Füzesgyarmat	12256	0,20
	Pálháza	12362	0,20
	Tiszaföldvár	13815	0,20
	Rákóczi falva	14207	0,20
	Lábatlan	15255	0,20
	Szentlőrinc	15866	0,20
	Gönc	15936	0,20
	Fegyvernek	16647	0,20
	Aba	17376	0,20
	Demecser	17756	0,20
	Hajós	18759	0,20
	Bábolna	19363	0,20
	Biharkeresztes	19956	0,20
Mohács	23959	0,20	
Ibrány	25636	0,20	
Balkány	26958	0,20	
Dunaföldvár	31501	0,20	
Bátonyterenye	33534	0,20	
346-358	Újkígyós	2352	0,13
	Kiskőrös	9344	0,13
	Nyírlugos	11271	0,13
	Körösladány	11615	0,13
	Zalakaros	11785	0,13
	Budapest 03. ker.	18069	0,13
	Kemecse	19992	0,13
	Csákvár	20002	0,13
	Alsózsolca	21032	0,13
	Téglás	23214	0,13
Gyál	25627	0,13	

#	Name	HCSO ID	Municipality Openness Index
	Túrkeve	28228	0,13
	Elek	32957	0,13
359-366	Baktalórántháza	2325	0,07
	Zamárdi	6008	0,07
	Mezőcsát	13833	0,07
	Fonyód	14632	0,07
	Soltvadkert	19983	0,07
	Nagykálló	24785	0,07
	Kadarkút	26453	0,07
	Nagyhalász	27155	0,07
367-368	Abaújszántó	3595	0,00
368	Csenger	30641	0,00

Source: CRCB