

**COST Action IS1207 Local Public Sector Reforms:  
An International Comparison**

**Prospects for a European Municipal Data  
Archive (EMDA)**

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## Summary

This report summarizes a review of the availability of comparable municipal level data on local politics and administration in 29 European countries (the EU member countries excluding Bulgaria, Cyprus, Luxemburg and Malta but including Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey and also Israel). The information was collected through a survey of experts, mainly members of the Cost Action Project on Local Public Sector Reforms (IS1207) that was carried out 2013-2017. The report shows that data availability varies between the different countries. However, with some work it would be possible to establish, for the first time, a database, covering 18-20 countries and with selected data on local political, administrative and socio-economic conditions for a specific year. A second, and more ambitious stage, which may require recoding and processing of data, would make it possible to add further years, countries and variables.

## A European Municipal Data Archive

### Background

All European citizens live in municipalities<sup>1</sup>. The municipality is the unit of democracy closest to the citizens and to which the nearest political decision-makers are elected. It is the level where it is most likely that citizens have their own experience of attempts to influence public decision-making and where they may know a politician personally. The municipality provides functions and carries out services that are directly relevant for its citizens. This is where the consequences of the delivery and quality of public services and policies are most immediately experienced by the general public. For many, this is also the nearest unit of territorial identification (Sisk 2001). The municipalities are located in a multi-level setting, where functions may be shared with and be dependent upon other levels of government.

In total, there are almost 100,000 municipalities in the European Union, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland (Loughlin et al. 2011). Although means of direct democracy have become more common at local level in most countries, all European countries have local government systems that are either entirely based on or, as in the case of Switzerland, have significant components of representative democracy (Egner et al. 2013, Ladner 2011). Within the EU, the municipalities employ 50 percent of all public employees and their economies represent on average 16 percent of the GDP, although with extensive variations between countries. Local government provide important services and contribute to the implementation of national policies. They also have an important role in stabilizing and legitimizing the polities within national systems of government (Kuhlmann & Bouckaert 2016).

Despite the significance of the municipal level of government in the European countries, comparative research has been hampered by the lack of standardized and comparable data. Many studies have been confined to just one country or one particular reform, which has restricted sharing knowledge countries and the drawing of more general conclusions.

This need was recognized by Cost Action IS1207 “Local Public Sector Reforms: An International Comparison” which noted that “(d)atabases on local public sector reforms are fragmented, incomparable, incoherent, nationally scattered and confined in their methodological approach”<sup>2</sup>. The Cost Action Project was initiated by Professor Sabine Kuhlmann, currently at Potsdam University, Germany, and was jointly led by herself and Professor Geert Bouckaert at KU Leuven, Belgium. It gathered 60 renowned local government scholars from 30 countries during the period 2013-2017. The purpose was to initiate and stimulate comparative research on local reforms in European countries. The Cost Action Project has generated a large number of books and articles and further publications are on their way. Although these have significantly enhanced our knowledge, they have not been able to place every municipality in a comparative perspective. This would require data at municipal level that is comparable between countries.

For this reason, initiative was taken within the Cost Action to explore the prospects for setting up a joint European municipal level database, and the author of this report was given the responsibility for carrying out that task.

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<sup>1</sup> Municipalities is used as the generic term for the first tier of local government. The relevant units in each country are presented in CEMR (2016) as *local level local governments*. In most countries this corresponds to the LAU level in the NUTS system (since 2017).

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.cost.eu/COST\\_Actions/isch/IS1207](http://www.cost.eu/COST_Actions/isch/IS1207)

### Why research on municipalities in a multi-level setting?

A focus on the municipalities is not only relevant due to their role as democratic units of decision-making and as providers of local services. It is also justified due to the significant challenges that this level of government is currently undergoing. The financial crisis has had a profound impact on local service delivery in many European countries. In addition, multi-level governance has opened up municipalities for stronger dependency on local economic forces and on decisions by other levels of government. With increasingly critical and demanding citizens (Norris 2011), representative democracy is under pressure at both the national and local level. This is expressed through lower turnout in local elections, weakening - and in some countries less presence of - political parties, reduction of citizens' trust in local elected representatives and questioning of the competence of those who are elected (Kersting & Vetter 2003). The quality of democracy in general and at other levels of government has also been criticized (Crouch 2004, Norris 2011, Papadopoulos 2013, Ferrin and Kriesi 2016), but the demands at the local level are particularly salient as the municipalities are often the main providers of local public services and functions and are the units of democracy closest to the citizens. Nevertheless, the consequences of these challenges are likely to vary not only between countries but also between municipalities. We need to know more about these municipalities and their challenges in a comparative setting.

It is also relevant to study municipalities as political systems. As suggested by John (2006), they are characterized by *numerosity* and *propinquity* which has several analytical advantages. The large number of local units in each country offers variations in conditions and solutions which makes it possible to investigate features and consequences of various types of municipalities. Although their autonomy varies, all municipalities have a significant amount of self-governing capacity (Ladner et al 2019). Municipalities are also attractive to study due to the closeness between policy and effect, and between the policy-makers and the citizens. However, as most studies of variation between municipalities have taken place within just one country, we do not know to what extent similar patterns occur at local level in other countries as well. For example, do small municipalities function as political systems in similar ways in different countries? What is the relationship between democratic quality and service provision? To what extent and under what circumstances does political stability at national level correspond to stability in the way municipalities are governed?

There are also good reasons to study municipalities as local units in systems of multi-level governance. All municipalities are units within states but they may also be related to regional levels of self-government. These levels are increasingly interacting and their resources are combined in order to deal with common problems. A database on municipal conditions may be combined with information about other levels of government and of multi-level networks.

### Existing European municipal data sets

At present there is no data archive containing information about the social, political and administrative conditions across all the European municipalities. There are not even more limited comparative databases – eg, for just a handful of countries – in existence. However, two European databases with population data on municipalities are available, both administrated by Eurostat.

The first consists of population statistics at the level of *Local Administrative Units (LAU)*<sup>3</sup>. Population and area statistics are collected and presented every year for all EU, EFTA and, where available,

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<sup>3</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/local-administrative-units>

candidate countries. In the 2018 statistics the data file consisted of a total of 122,000 LAUs from 38 countries. However, in a few countries, including Ireland, Greece and Portugal, the data concerns parishes and not municipalities as defined in this report, and by CEMR (2016).

Eurostat also provide a series of historical population statistics at LAU level, for every tenth year from 1961 to 2011 for all EU member states and for Iceland, Norway, FYR Macedonia, Lichtenstein, Switzerland and Turkey. In countries where territorial reforms have taken place, older statistics have been recalculated to correspond to the municipal boundaries that existed in 2011, in order to achieve comparability over time. However, this time series also suffers from inconsistency with regard to how the LAU units are defined. Although most of them are municipalities in our sense, in Greece, Lithuania, Slovenia and Turkey they are counties and in other countries, e.g. Denmark and the UK, they are parishes and not municipalities. Nevertheless, the LAU data is a valuable collection of population data, but does not include any other variables that would be relevant for political and administrative analyses.

The second database, *City Statistics*<sup>4</sup> (previously the Urban Audit), has statistical information on 1,800 cities in Europe and their functional urban areas, i.e. cities with commuting hinterlands. Apart from the EU countries, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey are also included. The database has statistics on, for example, demography, housing, health, labour market, education, environment, transport and tourism. No variables on political or administrative conditions are included. It is also limited in the sense that 98 percent of the municipalities are omitted.

There are also two sets of data about the regional level in Europe. *Eurostat regional data set*<sup>5</sup> consists of information at Nuts 2 level (323 units) and Nuts 3 level (1,492 units) from 38 countries on population, financial, social and health conditions and other matters in the regions but not on political and administrative factors. In the *Quality of Government EU Regional Data set*<sup>6</sup>, the Eurostat regional data for the Nuts 2 regions is complemented by a measure of regional corruption and quality of governance, based on citizen surveys. Although the Quality of Government regional data set is an important step forward it is limited to just one political factor, and due to its focus on the regional level, it is unable to grasp the full variation that exists at the local level.

### **The suggested data archive**

The suggested European Municipal Data Archive (EMDA) would pool existing municipal level data from different countries and ensure that it is comparable. The data would mainly be register data from national sources. Although it will be necessary to begin with just a few variables for as many countries as possible and for just one year, the long-term aim is to establish a comprehensive archive. Ideally, this would consist of data about all municipalities in all European countries, with variables on different aspects of the politics and administration of the municipalities and for specific years. The data archive should be easy to expand to cover additional countries, more variables and more years. Variables to be included need to be theoretically relevant, i.e. correspond to an identified need for new knowledge.

The *municipal level* needs to be fixed to the directly elected level of government closest to the citizens, above an elected parish level that exists in several countries, such as in Portugal and the UK. Fortunately, there is a general consensus in the literature on local government in Europe on what the

<sup>4</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/cities/overview>

<sup>5</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/regions/background>

<sup>6</sup> <https://qog.pol.gu.se/data/datadownloads/qogeuregionaldata>

municipal level is in all European countries (CEMR 2016, Dexia 2008, Loughlin et al 2011, Moreno 2012)<sup>7</sup> This would also be the data-carrying unit in the database.

The *countries* to be included should be at least the member states of the European Union and additional non-EU countries where data can be obtained (e.g. Iceland, Norway and Switzerland). Further countries may also be included.

With regard to *variables*, we would begin by selecting a small number of relevant variables but, depending on availability, would continue with further variables in subsequent stages. Although the aim should be to establish a comprehensive data archive with information from all municipalities on all variables, it is likely that data will not be available for some countries on certain variables. To include municipal data from federal countries that may have their statistical offices at sub-federal level, and from countries with a very large number of municipalities (e.g. France) will be particularly challenging.

An initial set of variables should be selected so that it becomes possible, right from the start, to analyze the functioning of municipalities as systems for representative democracy. This includes studies of the input, reforms and outputs of the local political system. To identify patterns of variations, we would also need information on the geography, demography and socio-economy of the municipalities. Initial variables would include:

- Local representative democracy: Council size, representation of different types of political parties, representation of women and ethnic minorities, electoral turnout, the role and use of the local referendum.
- Political and administrative reforms: Local reforms aiming at improving democracy and/or efficiency in the municipality
- Municipal services, costs and revenues: Types of services, proportion of private contractors, costs for different types of services, types of incomes, taxes, central government grants
- Geography, demography and socio-economy: Population size, population development, population density, age distribution, migration, geographical location within the country, citizens' level of education, mean income, poverty

Data should eventually also be collected for *specific years*. It seems reasonable to use population data already collected by Eurostat for its LAU database – although it would need to be adjusted so that it only consists of municipalities – and begin with a fairly recent year. In order to create time series, a five year interval could be reasonable. Hence, a second collection phase would go back five and perhaps also ten years. Future collection of data could expand the time series.

A special problem related to longitudinal data at municipal level is that municipal borders may change over time. Three types of change may occur – mergers of existing municipalities, splitting of municipalities into smaller units and border changes, i.e. transfers of territory from one municipality to another. As the purpose is to collect data over time, there has to be a mechanism for dealing with these changes. One way would be to use the division in municipalities in one particular year, such as 2011, and recalculate previous and subsequent data to fit these borders. In some cases this may require that values are estimated according to specified assumptions.

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<sup>7</sup> An exception is Portugal, where municipalities are ruled by assemblies that are not directly elected but consist of representatives of the directly elected parishes in their area. Despite this, they are usually regarded as being municipalities in the European sense.

Once the database has been set up, it will be made publicly available through a website and be open to all interested users.

The data archive will only be successful and be used if it is relevant for researchers, if the variables are comparable and if the quality of the data can be guaranteed. This includes ensuring that data is valid, i.e. that variables from different countries capture the same phenomena, are measured in the same way and that data is reliable, i.e. has been collected in a trustworthy way. Hence, it is essential that this can be safeguarded during the process of setting up the archive.

## Exploring data availability

### Introduction

As a basis for an assessment of the availability of comparable municipal level data, and thereby the prospects for a European Municipal Data Archive, a survey of experts was carried out. A local government researcher from each European country, mainly those participating in the Cost Action project on Local Reform, received a form with questions about the availability of municipal data in their country. One section concerned the general accessibility and the sources of the data, for example if there are websites where such data is available. The focus was primarily on register data, but if survey data is used, a large proportion of the municipalities need to be represented. It was also important to learn whether data is only available for municipalities over a certain population size or for specific regions. Information about the general reliability of the data was also requested.

However, the major part of the questionnaire consisted of questions on data on specific political, administrative and socio-economic variables in the municipalities. These questions were selected so that they could give an insight into just how available different types of data are in the country, with particular relevance for analyses of the inputs, outputs and reforms of local government. For each variable, the expert was asked to indicate the following:

The **comprehensiveness** of the data (whether it is available for all municipalities in the whole country, only for municipalities over a certain population size, only for municipalities in parts of the country or not available at all).

The **accessibility** of the data (whether it is immediately accessible without any processing; accessible, but requires recoding/processing or not accessible at all).

The **reliability** of the data (whether data is assessed to be highly reliable, i.e. fully or with only minor flaws reflecting the real situation; fairly reliable, i.e. despite major flaws still fairly accurately reflecting the real situation; or not reliable and therefore not recommended for use).

If there are any **costs** for obtaining the data (whether it is free of charge or not) and

What **type of data** it is (whether it is register based data, survey data with replies from municipal representatives or some other survey data).

The survey was carried out at the beginning of 2016 and was completed by experts from 29 countries. In order to ensure the accuracy of this report, a draft version was circulated among the experts in 2018. The replies for each country are reported in the Appendix. The countries are grouped according to type of local government system (Loughlin, Hendriks & Lidström 2011). The main patterns that can be identified on the basis of the table are summarized below.

### Local representative democracy

As mentioned above, municipalities are essentially units for local representative democracy. Key variables on local representative democracy seem to be available in practically all countries. Information about *the size of the municipal council* and *turnout in the last council elections* is available in all countries with the exception of Austria and Israel (only turnout) with some reservations also in Switzerland and Slovakia. Recoding is necessary in about ten countries. Data emanates from registers and usually has high quality.

Information on *party and non-party representation*, on the *proportion of female councilors* and on the *party affiliation of the mayor* is also highly accessible in most countries but with more exceptions. In Austria, Belgium, France and Israel it is either not available or limited to just a limited number of municipalities. Recoding is necessary for most countries. However, where data is available, it is regarded to be reliable, based on registers and is provided free of charge.

Data on the *gender of the mayor* is also highly accessible, but with even more exceptions. In addition to the above-mentioned Austria, Belgium, France and Israel, such data is not available in Spain and Romania either. In the remaining 22 countries where this data can be obtained for all municipalities, it seems to have high quality.

An indirect measure of the status of local representative democracy is the position of the local referendum. However, information on *the number of local referendums* in each municipality turned out to be less common and is restricted to only 12 countries.

On the whole, this suggests that the prospects for a European data archive with variables for different aspects of representative democracy are very good, although a few countries may not be represented, or in only a limited sense, for example with information only for larger municipalities. Data is available from countries from all parts of Europe.

### Political and administrative reforms

Following pressure over recent decades on local government to improve efficiency and effectiveness in their service delivery and to enhance local democracy, municipalities in all countries have been subject to reforms. In line with the distinctions made by the Cost Action project, we asked the experts to assess whether data was available on four types of reforms: *External (post) NPM-reforms*, *internal (post) NPM-reforms*, *territorial/functional rescaling* and *democratic renewal* (Kuhlmann & Bouckaert 2016). However, a problem in data analyses of these matters is that they all, apart from territorial and functional rescaling, suffer from lack of accuracy. The exact meaning of the different types of NPM-reforms and of democratic renewal is not clear so we would not know whether we would compare the same phenomena in the different countries. Not surprisingly, this is reflected in the answers from the experts.

Information on the different types of NPM-reforms at local level is available from just a handful of countries. Municipal data on democratic renewal can be obtained from more countries, but still in less than half of the countries under study. On the other hand, municipal data on territorial and functional rescaling is much more accessible and reliable and is available from about 15 countries. However, most of these are in Northern and Western Europe.



Therefore, the prospects for establishing a joint data set for analyses of political and administrative reforms are currently not promising. This would require that a uniform definition of such reforms is applied and that the data collection is made accordingly. Data from territorial and functional rescaling in selected parts of Europe could be included, although in many countries these reforms tend to be national and comprehensive rather than specific for each local authority.

### **Municipal services, costs and revenues**

As units for provision of public services, municipalities have a key role in relation to their citizens. Many of the services are provided on behalf of the state, as parts of national welfare programmes. It is important to be able to analyze the extent to which municipalities prioritize services differently and the effectiveness and efficiency of their delivery. Comparative data on services, costs and revenues would be very useful when analyzing variations in conditions for service delivery within and between countries. In the survey, the experts were asked about the availability of different types of expenditure data at municipal level.

A set of questions concerned *the cost per citizen for educational services, social assistance and housing*. For most of these services, such data turned out to be available from all municipalities in about 15 states – the Nordic countries, the Baltic States and the UK, Austria, Belgium, Portugal, Poland, Czech Republic, Romania and Israel. This suggests that selected comparative analyses within Europe would be possible, although it needs to be safeguarded that the data is standardized in a way that makes the countries comparable. Where data is available it is also usually of good quality.

For analyses of variations in the amount of financial resources available for the municipalities and their degree of financial autonomy we also need data on the size of different types of revenue. Therefore, the survey asked for information about the accessibility of data on *proportion of revenue from own taxes, from shared taxes, from general central government grants, from specific central government grants and from the EU*.

With the exception of data on specific grants and revenue from the EU, this data can be obtained in about 24 countries from all parts of Europe. Exceptions are France, Slovakia and Turkey. Data on specific grants is available from 22 countries and on EU funding from 13 countries. However, when available, the data needs to be checked for comparability. In this field too, data seems to be of good quality.

Data on municipal services and finances is available in a surprisingly large number of countries. However, the issue of comparability is a serious problem that needs to be addressed before it can be merged into a comprehensive data archive and used for comparative analyses of local government outputs. For example, both the funding of the services and the tax base may be calculated differently in different countries.

### **Geographic, demographic and socio-economic conditions**

In order to identify and explain patterns of variations, we also need to know more about the municipalities than just how they are governed and the services that they provide. Variables that are then likely to be needed concern the geographic, demographic and social conditions in the municipal area.

Basic population data, on the *size, development and density of the population, the proportion of young and old people and the proportion of non-nationals* is available at municipal level in all surveyed countries. The quality of this data is high. Likewise, there is also data on the proportion of non-nationals in each municipality in practically every country, with the exception of France, Hungary, Romania, Israel and Turkey. Hence, it should be possible to analyze whether differences in, for example, representative democracy and service delivery follow differences in population characteristics, such as municipal size, degree of urbanization and age distribution.

The experts were also asked if information was available on *the type and location of the municipality*, for example whether it is a big city, a suburban municipality, mainly a town or mainly a small village or rural countryside. About 20 of the experts responded that such data is available, although it needs to be recognized that this kind of information has to be further standardized before it can be used in the comparative data set.

The availability of data on socio-economic conditions in the municipalities, such as *the level of education of the population and the unemployment rate* is also very promising. Education statistics are only missing in Germany, the Netherlands and Spain, and local unemployment data is only absent in Estonia. Hence, it would also be possible to include socio-economic conditions in the data archive.

### Country patterns

It has been clear from the overview of the different subject areas that accessibility varies between countries, and in a fairly consistent way. One way of summarizing differences and similarities between countries could be to add the number of variables in which data is available for all municipalities in the whole country (i.e. the “1” replies on comprehensiveness in the Appendix). We will omit the four questions on local reform as the prospects of finding sufficient comparable information are very slim. If all variables are available in a country, the value would be 24 on this index. The results are summarized in the table below.

**Table                    Accessibility to municipal level data in European countries**

Score	Countries
24	Czech Republic
23	Portugal, Latvia, Lithuania
22	Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Poland
21	United Kingdom, Sweden, Estonia, Romania
20	Ireland, Belgium, Italy, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia
19	The Netherlands, Greece
16	Switzerland*
15	Spain, Israel
13	Germany
12	Austria, Slovakia, Turkey
10	France

Note: \* not comprehensive as data collection is mainly through surveys

Only the Czech Republic reaches the maximum score, i.e. data is available for all municipalities and on all variables. Even if we would allow for missing data on a few of the variables, and set the limit to 20, we would still be able to include 19 of the 29 countries in the data set. Also, these countries come

from different parts of Europe – the British Isles, the Nordic countries, Eastern Europe and Southern Europe.

With the remarkable exception of the Czech Republic, a general pattern is that data is more easily accessible in states that have a relatively small number of municipalities. It is also available mainly in unitary states. In France in particular, with their 36,000 municipalities, and in the federations of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, where data collection may be carried out at sub-national level, data is less accessible. Nevertheless, a certain amount of data would still be available in these countries for municipalities of a certain size. Even if the whole country cannot be covered, it should be possible to include data from a selection of German and Austrian *Länder* in order to get representation from federal countries. This lack of full representation from major countries would be an in-built bias in a European data set which would have to be taken into account. Nevertheless, such a data set would still be able to capture considerable variation between municipalities and states and identify general European patterns.

## **Implementation strategy**

### **The next steps**

The general conclusion from the overview is that sufficient data is accessible to make it worth attempting to set up a European Municipal Data Archive, although it would be far from comprehensive. Initially the strategy should be to establish such a database for around 18-20 countries, with data on local representative democracy, municipal services, costs and revenues; and on geographic, demographic and socio-economic conditions for one year. Apart from those listed in the survey, further variables should also be identified.

However, a necessary requirement is funding, initially for the establishment of the database and later for its maintenance and further development. At present, the currently most interesting avenue for funding is through the proposed REPDEM project, which is a joint, comparative multi-level governance infrastructure project with a main focus on representative democracy, headed by Professor Torbjörn Bergman at Umeå University, Sweden. The project has data on political institutions, political parties and governments at national level from European countries. REPDEM has been given top priority by the Swedish Research Council in a preliminary assessment. The Council will launch a programme with funding for large infrastructure projects in the near future.

In addition, we would explore the potential interest among national and European statistical agencies and European organizations who have an interest in the situation regarding local government and the provision of local services. Such organizations include Eurostat, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE) of the Council of Europe and The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). These organizations should also be approached with the purpose of investigating whether they are interested in joint collections of data that may be relevant for both research and practice. Indeed, municipal level data can be used for benchmarking and comparisons in order to improve learning across local governments and also in service provision. Hence, the data archive would also have practical use in everyday policy-making.

## Resource needs

Major items in a budget for the European Municipal Data Archive include resources for setting up the database, and for expanding and maintaining it.

Setting up the database:

- Remunerating country experts who gather and, when required, recode the data and safeguard the quality of the data.
- Central function: Coordination, administration, establishing the joint database. Standardization and overarching quality controls of all data. Setting up a website. Integration into the REPDEM data base. Contacts with European statistical agencies and organizations.
- Support from statistical experts.

Expanding the database:

The data set can be expanded by adding additional years, variables and countries. This will require further remuneration of country experts as well as additional resources for central coordination. Adding statistics of interest for other European agencies and organizations requires that they are willing to financially support such measures.

Maintaining the database:

A special challenge concerns the long-term maintenance of the archive. It needs to be connected to a host university that commits itself to keeping it updated and available. This would also include maintaining the website. Both the central function and the country experts need to be involved in the maintenance.

## Conclusions

The aim of this report is to explore the prospects for a European Municipal Data Archive for research on local politics, democracy and administration, and containing data on geographic, demographic and socio-economic conditions. Results from a survey of experts made up of European local government scholars indicate that the prospects are very good, as long as the database is limited to the 18-20 countries that have comprehensive sets of municipal data that is largely comparable across countries. Setting up such a database, and integrating it with a larger database on representative democracy would be possible, if the necessary funding can be secured.

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## Appendix

## Survey of experts: replies on the availability of internationally comparative municipal level data

	British Isles		Rhinelandic states					Nordic states					Southern European states					Visegrad states				Baltic states			Balkan states			Other		
	Ireland	United Kingdom	Austria	Belgium	Germany	Netherlands	Switzerland	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	France	Greece	Italy	Portugal	Spain	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania	Croatia	Romania	Slovenia	Israel	Turkey	
Number of municipalities	114	411	2,100	589	11,442	418	2,551	98	311	76	430	290	36,680	325	8,092	308	8,116	6,251	3,155	2,479	2,891	226	119	60	556	3,182	212	254	2,950	
<b>LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY</b>																														
<b>Size of municipal council</b>																														
Comprehensiveness	1	1	5	1	1	1	1,2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Accessibility	2	1		2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2
Reliability	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Costs	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Type of data		3		1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Proportion of female councillors</b>																														
Comprehensiveness	1	1	5	3	2	1	1,2	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	5	1	5	1	
Accessibility	2	2		2	3	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Reliability	1	1		1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	
Costs	1	1		1	2	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Type of data		3		3	2	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1

	Ireland	United Kingdom	Austria	Belgium	Germany	Netherlands	Switzerland	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	France	Greece	Italy	Portugal	Spain	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania	Croatia	Romania	Slovenia	Israel	Turkey		
<b>Party (and non-party) representation</b>																															
Comprehensiveness	1	1	5	3	2	1	1,2	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	1
Accessibility	2	2		2	3	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2			2	
Reliability	1	1		1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	
Costs	1	1		1	2	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1			1	
Type of data		3		3	2	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	
<b>The party affiliation of the mayor</b>																															
Comprehensiveness	1	1	5	3	2	1	1,2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5		
Accessibility	2	2		2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2			2	
Reliability	1	1		1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	
Costs	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	
Type of data		3		3	1	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1		3	1	1	1	1	1			1	
<b>Gender of the mayor</b>																															
Comprehensiveness	1	1	5	3	2	1	1,2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	5	1	
Accessibility	2	1		2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2		2			2	
Reliability	1	1		1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	
Costs	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1			1	
Type of data		3		3	1	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1			1	

	Ireland	United Kingdom	Austria	Belgium	Germany	Netherlands	Switzerland	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden	France	Greece	Italy	Portugal	Spain	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania	Croatia	Romania	Slovenia	Israel	Turkey	
<b>Turnout in last council elections</b>																														
Comprehensiveness	1	1	5	1	1	1	1,2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	1
Accessibility	2	2		2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2			2
Reliability	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1
Costs	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1
Type of data		3		1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1
<b>No. of referendums in municipality</b>																														
Comprehensiveness			5	1	5	1	1,2		1	5		1	5	5	1	1	5	1	1	1	5	5		1		1	5	5	5	3
Accessibility				2	3	1	2		2			2	3	3	2	2		1	2	1				1		2			2	
Reliability				1		?	1		1			1			1	1		1	1	1			1		1	1			2	
Costs		1		1		1	1		1			1			1	1		1	1	1			1		2	2			1	
Type of data		3		3		1	2		1			1			1	1		1	1	1			1		1	1			1	
<b>POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS</b>																														
<b>External (post) NPM-reforms</b>																														
Comprehensiveness	3	5	5	3	4	5	1,2		5	5	1	5	5	2	1	1	5	4	1				4	3		5	5	5	3	
Reliability	1			1	2		1,2				1		3	1	1	1		2	2				2	2					2	
Costs	1			1	1		1				1			1	2	1		2	3				1	1						
Type of data				2	2		2				2			2	3	1		2	1,2				2	3					1	



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<b>Internal (post) NPM-reforms</b>																													
Comprehensiveness	3	5	5	3	4	5	1,2		5	5	1	5	5	2	5	1	5	4	1				4	1		5	5	5	3
Reliability	1			1	2		1,2				1		3	1		2		2	2				2	1					2
Costs	1			1	1		1				1			1		2		2	1				1	1					
Type of data				2	1		2				2			2		2		2	1,2				2	2					1
<b>Territorial/functioning rescaling</b>																													
Comprehensiveness	1	5	1	3	1	1	1,2		1	1	1	1	4	2	1	1	5	1	1				4			5	5	5	3
Reliability	1		1	1	1	1	1,2		1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1		1	2				2						2
Costs	1		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1				1						
Type of data			1	2	1	1	2		2	3	1	2	3	2	1	1		1	1,2				2						1
<b>Democratic renewal</b>																													
Comprehensiveness	3	5	5	3	1	5	1,2		3	2	1	1	5	2	1	1	5	4	5			4	4	1		2	5	5	3
Reliability	1			1	1		1,2		1	1	1	1	3	1	1	2		2				1	2	1		2			2
Costs	1			1	1		1		1	2	1	1		1	1	2		2				1	1	1		1			
Type of data				2	1		2		2	2	2	2		2	1	2		2				3	2	2		1			1
<b>MUNICIPAL SERVICES, COSTS AND REVENUES</b>																													
<b>Cost/citizen for educational services</b>																													
Comprehensiveness		1	1	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	5	5	5	1	2	1	5	1	5	1	1	1	3	1	5	1	
Accessibility		2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1,2	2	1	2	3			2	2	1		1		2	2	1	2	2		1	
Reliability		1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2				2	2	1		1		1	2	1	2	2		1	
Costs		2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1				2	1	1		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Type of data		2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				2	1	1		1		1	3	1	2	1		1	

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<b>Cost/citizen for social assistance</b>																														
Comprehensiveness	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	5	1	2	2	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	3	1	5	1	4	
Accessibility	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1,2	2	1	2	2	3		2	2	2	1	2	2		2	2	1	2	2		1	2	
Reliability	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2				1	2	2	1	1	1		1	2	1	2	2		1	2	
Costs	1,2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1			1	2	1	1	2	1		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	
Type of data	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1		1	3	1	2	1		1	1	
<b>Cost/citizen for housing</b>																														
Comprehensiveness	1	1	5	1	3	1	5	1	5	1	1	1	5	5	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	1	1	3	1	5	1		
Accessibility	2	2		2	2	1	2		2	1	2	2	3			2		1		2		2	2	2	2	2		1		
Reliability	1	1		1	1	1	2		1	1	2					2		1		2		1	2	1	2	1		1		
Costs	1	1,2		1	1	2	2		1	1	1	1				2		1		1		1	1	1	1	1		1		
Type of data	2			1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1				1		1		1		1	3	2	2	1		1		
<b>Proportion of revenue from own taxes</b>																														
Comprehensiveness	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Accessibility	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2		2	2	1	2	2	2	1	
Reliability	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	
Costs	1	1,2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Type of data	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	

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<b>Proportion of revenue from shared taxes</b>																																
Comprehensiveness	1	1	1	1	1	5	5	1	1	1	1		4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Accessibility	2	2	1	1	1			2	1	2	1		2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
Reliability	1	1	1	1	1			2	1	1	1		2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1		1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Costs	1	1,2	1	1	1			2	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Type of data		2	1	3	1			1	1	1	1		3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
<b>Proportion of revenue from CG general grants</b>																																
Comprehensiveness	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	
Accessibility	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2
Reliability	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	
Costs	1	1,2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Type of data		2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
<b>Proportion of revenue from CG specific grants</b>																																
Comprehensiveness	1	1	5	1	1	5	5	1	1	1	1	5	4	1	1	1	5	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	
Accessibility	2	2		1	1			2	1	2	1	3	2	2	2	1		1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	
Reliability	1	1		1	1			2	1	1	1		2	1	1	1		1	1	1		1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	
Costs	1	1,2		1	1			2	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	2	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Type of data		2		3	1			1	1	1	1		3	1	1	1		1	1	1		1	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	





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<b>Proportion of non-nationals</b>																															
Comprehensiveness	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	5	2	1	1	1	3	1	5	1	5	5		
Accessibility	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2		1	2	1	1	1		2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2				
Reliability	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1				
Costs	1	1	2	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1				
Type of data	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1				
<b>Type/location of municipality</b>																															
Comprehensiveness	1	3	1	1	1	5	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	5	1	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Accessibility	1	3	1	1	1		2		1	2	1	2	1	2		1		1		2	1		1	2	1	1	2	1	1		
Reliability	1	3	1	1	1		1		1	1	1	1	1	1		1		1		2	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Costs	1	3	1	1	1		1		1	1	1	1	1	1		1		1		1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Type of data	1	3	1	3	1		1		1	1	1	1	1	1		1		1		1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
<b>Proportion highly educated</b>																															
Comprehensiveness	1	1	1	1	5	5	1,2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Accessibility	1	1	1	1	1		2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2		
Reliability	1	1	1	1	2		1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1		
Costs	1	1	2	1	1		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Type of data	1	2	1	1	3		1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1		

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<b>Unemployment rate</b>																													
Comprehensiveness	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Accessibility	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2		1	1	2	1	2	1	2
Reliability	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Costs	1	1	2	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Type of data	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1

### Legend

Comprehensiveness: 1. Available for every municipality in the country; 2. Available only for municipalities over a certain population size; 3. Available only for municipalities in certain parts of the country; 4. Both (2) and (3); 5. Not available at all

Accessibility: 1. Immediately accessible without any processing; 2. Accessible, but requires recoding/processing; 3. Not accessible at all

Reliability: 1. Highly reliable, i.e. fully or with only minor flaws reflecting the real situation; 2. Fairly reliable, i.e. despite major flaws still fairly accurately reflecting the real situation; 3. Not reliable and therefore not recommended for use

Costs: 1. Free of charge; 2. Not free of charge

Type of data: 1. Register based data; 2. Survey data with replies from municipal representatives; 3. Other survey data