

# Transparent Town

**Audit, preparation and application of selected  
anti-corruption measures in Martin**

**MARTIN**



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You can download this abstract and find out more at: [www.transparenttown.eu](http://www.transparenttown.eu)



## Introduction

Too many a time we come across media scandals regarding corruption and non-transparent handling of public finances and assets. For a long time I had considered a project that would be truly transparent in all areas of self-government administration and not just some, as a few municipalities have already tried. Holes in the fence, which should act as a legal protective barrier for municipalities from corruption, are so large they allow predators to slip through with full pockets without breaking any laws. It permits them to be untouchable. For the town, to which I am the Mayor, I wanted a project that would not only repair a single hole in the fence but a project that would be an inspiration to other municipalities and for the whole country as well. Thanks to experience and professional assistance from Transparency International Slovakia, we, as first in Slovakia, have managed to launch a complex package of anti-corruption measures. These make our municipality fully transparent; they also minimize the corruption on all administration levels. Simply, this project gives no opportunity to corruption.

I do not know about you but words can only persuade me to a certain extent. I then look for actual proofs that confirm the statement. And such proof about the handling of the trust placed into our hands by citizens of the town of Martin in last elections can be found on our project web page. Everybody can see that when the town of Martin is selling, renting, recruiting employees or handling invoices, it is done so with transparency.

As an example, I will mention a purchase of services and goods. Anybody can apply for a contract with the town and thus participate in our electronic auction house. All steps of the public procurement are made publicly. This means that everybody can easily find information on tender calls, process of ongoing and closed transactions, read a concluded contract with a winner of an electronic auction, or check an invoice with an actual sum of money paid by the town to the contractor 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The same process is followed when recruiting new employees, social housing allocation, making of town laws or voting by the Town Council members.

Another factor that motivated me to implement the anti-corruption measures was the amount of disadvantageous contracts I had inherited as a Mayor from my forerunners. I do not want anything similar to be repeated again in Martin. I do not want any future town leaders to ever have to deal with interminable contracts as we have to do now. That is why I personally proposed to limit my statutory competences in order not to be able, as a Mayor, to sign inexpedient contracts behind “closed doors“.

The transparency is not only about auditing matters that have already happened. Our project enables to oversee and directly check our steps before they are approved and realized. Thus, a citizen can truly participate in public affairs. Thanks to the project, a citizen may not only overlook what is happening but can also annotate and thus influence our decisions. Citizen hence becomes an active part of the municipality administration.

When in the beginning I mentioned corruption scandals in media, it is not an accident that the town of Martin is not part of them. It is a result of hard work we have done when developing our project of the Transparent Town. Week by week I hear positive response to it and my belief that one day our project will become a guide for other self-government administrations and for the country as well is becoming a reality. Our project is a guideline for many municipalities and also our government.

Dear readers, I here would like to appeal to you to help fulfill the meaning of the Transparent Town project. The tools we have in the town of Martin to directly and transparently check our elected officials would lose its sense if you did not use them. It is up to you to regularly visit the web page of our transparent town. It will allow you to see how we manage the trust and competences placed into our hands.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrej Hrnčiar', is centered on the page.

Andrej Hrnčiar  
Mayor of Martin

## Situation before the initiative

When disposing of public finances and properties, we righteously meet with a question whether these are used most effectively and to what extent the existing rules create space for other influences, which are best described as - and most probably have translation in every language - corruption. In their power, municipalities and other institutions, which are financed from public resources, not only have decision making in public resources but also in job placement, or rent or sale of public properties they administer. Despite the fact that most countries at least set out rules for people responsible in these organizations in such decision making, it is mostly done behind closed doors. These are ideal conditions to oblige not only by a set of basic rules that the legislature defines. These are, however, optimal terms when areas not covered by legislature provide an interest to individuals or groups of people with certain interest. Along with cases, when the law has truly been broken, we far too frequently meet with stories in media that portray results of decisions when the law has actually not been violated but it is far too clear that public interest was not the priority. Public finances and assets, whose sources many a time are taxes, fees, or nonreturnable contributions and grants, are thus used inefficiently. Thus public resources, instead of being utilized in maximum for the public interest, only partially fulfill its role. It has not yet been possible to formulate the financial loss created due to an influence of corruption in government sector in real numbers. We only come across with guesses and speculations about how many percentages of public resources are, on account of corrupted behavior, lost, or how could these finances aid schools, senior citizens or those in need. The problem of corruption ails every society which is proved by the number of projects that try to manage it on local or international level. We can mention Fight against Corruption - the UN's partnership agreement, OECD agreement on Fight against Bribery or the monitoring mechanism of European Council titled Group of States against Corruption (GRECO). The municipality's top representatives in the town of Martin, in Slovak Republic, have decided to fight the corruption in a unique way. In cooperation with the local branch of the internationally renowned organization Transparency International, the town leaders created and launched a project titled "Transparent Town". Its goal is to eliminate the space for corruption by making all processes, steps and town decisions "transparent". It is done with an assistance of tools, which the municipality places in the hands of its citizens, and by encouraging the citizens to get involved and be active observers of what is going on at the town hall and thus directly act as supervisors. In a democratic society, the public decides about public issues in elections, in which it places trust in those, who carry the responsibility for actions and decisions in public sector on their behalf up until next elections. The leaders of the town of Martin have come to agreement to be under the public radar at all times. All town contracts, invoices, hiring of employees, rent and sale of town properties, grant programs, and assigning of town apartments to those in need will all be made public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For a few months now, the project has met with big success nationwide. Electronic auctions, which are part of the project, save the municipality one third of preliminary costs.



## Road to transparency

After becoming the mayor, Andrej Hrnčiar met with contracts that were disadvantageous to the town. Some decisions of his predecessors and their administration, maybe unintentionally but nevertheless, showed deficiencies as to the following the public's interest. He also met with the dissatisfaction of the public of which a big part expressed distrust in the fulfillment of public's interest even though many times they actually lacked any real facts and their disbelief was only a result of insufficient information. The public just simply named public services and governmental sector a feeding ground to corruption. Andrej Hrnčiar began to meet with nontransparent influences that tried to affect the decision making process of the mayor, elected town representatives as well as employees of the town hall. When searching for possible solutions that would restrict such behaviors, he met with the representatives of the local branch of the internationally renowned organization Transparency International Slovensko (TIS). Here he came across with a will to cooperate on a project that would complexly solve the problem of corruption on the municipality level in the town of Martin.

At this point, it was out there in the open that such project was being prepared. He also received support from the Embassy of the United States of America in Slovakia. On the town level, the financing of the project that would cover the work of internal and external team members of TIS was an issue that needed to be solved. The only way for this was to approve the necessary sum of money from the town's budget. As only members of the Town Council have such competence, this step counted with the approval of the majority of them. In the opposite case, even with the effort of the mayor, the project would have been left without financial coverage it needed. Even at this point it was helpful that the whole process took place transparently and that Council members during voting on the project felt they were watched by the public. Public support of the then-Ambassador of the United States of America to Slovakia, His Excellency Vincent Obsitnik, and the public's opinion it helped to impress, was a huge help too. After approval of the necessary finances, the signing of contract could have taken place between the town of Martin and TIS, based on which the organization began to work on the project of the package of anticorruption measures. Of course, an intense cooperation from the town and its employees, who apart from their regular job duties worked on the preparation of the project on a big scale, was needed. In this case, however, no additional financial boost was necessary.

In the first phase, TIS came with 17 most corruption-sensitive town policies. In the next step, TIS in cooperation with town hall employees worked out actual measures that implemented the project into procedures and internal town regulations. Then it was only up to the town's representatives and employees to further follow the project's steps. It is expected that a year from the implementation of the project into everyday life of the town hall, an audit is to take place that shall evaluate changes and results that the anticorruption project has brought on the local municipality level. Based on the results accomplished so far, we can justly declare that all, whom are in any way connected to the public service, will benefit from the project. The public appreciates the transparency of the municipality processes, opportunity to monitor, analyze and participate in the services and last but not least, the more efficient use of public resources, which are gained by taxation and various fees. The elected municipality representatives and employees value the fact that due to transparency, the rules based on which they execute their duties and responsibilities are clear. On one hand, it frees them from the effort of being manipulated into decisions they would not want to take, and on the other hand, it helps them build a clean record and trust in their work performance on behalf of public interest.

## Short chronology

The chronology of the project is divided into three phases.

First phase: May 2008 – August 2008 includes an audit of selected policies of the town

A vote of the Town Council in May 2008 which, based on a proposal of the Mayor Andrej Hrnčiar, allocated 23,000 EUR from the town budget for this project presents the first phase and the official start of the project establishing the anticorruption strategies in the town of Martin. In the months of July and August, the town, in cooperation with the Transparency International Slovakia (hereinafter TIS), was thus able to launch the first phase that consisted of a diagnosis of an existing state of corruption possibilities – the level of transparency – and a free hand in the decision making by the municipality. The outcome of the audit was a 60-page document titled “The Report from the audit of the policies of the town of Martin”, in which TIS identified 17 key policies that might have an effect on the extent of corruption in the town.

Second phase: September 2008 – April 2009 includes preparation and approval of anticorruption measures in selected town policies

The second phase introduced the processing of the actual suggestions of anticorruption standards. During the second phase, a number of meetings and workshops were carried out, whose aim was to define the individual anticorruption measures. In this phase, a part of the project carried on with the already running project named “Digital Town” – the e-Government concept on a municipality level – and e-Democracy, which, among others, also brings free internet to citizens of the town, full digitalization of the Town Council meetings and gradual introduction of intelligent electronic application forms. The outcome of the second phase of the project was a 130-page long document titled “The Proposal of the anticorruption measures for the Town of Martin”, which contains a set of anticorruption recommendations including suggestions for procedure guidelines and town laws and regulations. In February 2009, this material was introduced to the Town Council’s committees during a special assembly. The material contains a preface, a methodology of how the measures had been put together, and an overview of realized activities of TIS during the second phase of the project as well as proposed anticorruption measures for the town of Martin. In April 2009, the Mayor Andrej Hrnčiar called for a special assembly of the Town Council that dealt exclusively with an implementation of the measures resulting from the audit of TIS. The meeting was broadcasted live via town television and on the town’s own website [www.martin.sk](http://www.martin.sk).

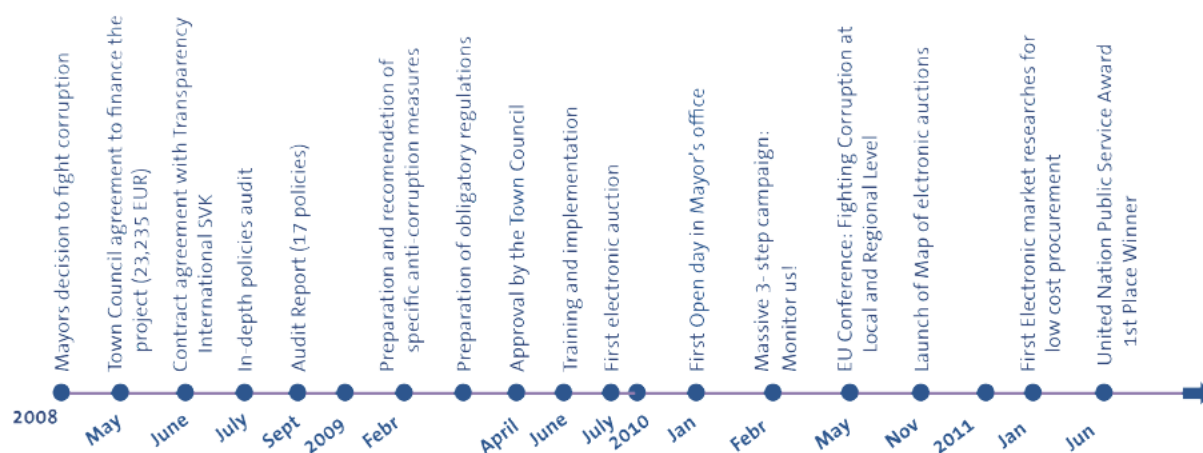
Third phase: May 2009 – Up-to-date has included the implementation of accepted measures in everyday life

In June 2009, the town of Martin commenced the Ethical Code for all employees of the Town Hall. The main objective is to define the rules for an impartial execution of work while specifying the rights and responsibilities of the town employees as basics for building the trust of the public in their work. Since June 2009, the hiring of employees in the Town Hall as well as other town organizations has been executed according to the procedure that specifies the selection of members to a committee that decides who will fill vacant job positions, which



helps prevent conflicts of interest of its members. The procedure also specifies ways of informing about vacant job positions, the actual course of selecting the candidate and informing not only about the results but the whole process of hiring a new employee. On July 4, 2009, the town launched a new domain [www.transparentnemesto.sk](http://www.transparentnemesto.sk). An electronic auction house [martin.ebit.sk](http://martin.ebit.sk), via which the first electronic auctions were carried out on the same day, is also part of the domain. So far we have 186 registered companies waiting for our electronic auctions to take place. We have already executed more than 100 electronic auctions with 257 participants who placed 941 bids; and due to the way we do public procurement we saved almost 300,000 EUR, which represents a saving of 23%. This makes Martin's anti-corruption package not only a remedy for corruption, but it also effectively eases the impact of the economic crisis on the municipality budget. Since the beginning of 2010, I followed up on new activities on monthly basis such the Open day in my office, where I received 125 visitors, and the Day of the town borrows. In 2010, we carried out a massive campaign to inform our citizens about a tool they can use to monitor us and to encourage them to do so on regular basis. We have launched the Map of electronic auctions. Lately we improved the way we publish database of town contracts, invoices and orders through intuitive tool the citizens can use to sort, filter and search data in database. In January 2011, after an initial testing, we use an electronic market research for low cost procurement in range from 400 to 2,999 EUR... At the beginning I have declared that start of this project is only a beginning and there is a long way in front of us with many steps to take. This is still true and we still work not only on improvements for old but also on new measurements.

### Step by step process 2008 – present day



## Strategies

Step by step process:

- A) Start point was a decision of Mayor Andrej Hrnčiar
- B) Town Council agreement to finance this project
- C) Contract agreement with Transparency International Slovakia (TIS)
- D) In-depth policies audit

The 17 key policies were the subject of the audit:

1. The policy of sale of fixed and non-fixed assets
2. The policy of rent of fixed and non-fixed assets
3. The policy of hiring new employees for the town hall and other town organizations
4. The policy of public's participation in municipality decision making
5. The policy of access to information on how the municipality runs
6. The policy of ethics – ethical infrastructure and conflict of interests for elected town representatives
7. The policy of ethics – ethical infrastructure and conflict of interests for town employees
8. The policy of ethics – ethical infrastructure and conflict of interests for town organizations' employees
9. The media policy
10. The policy of zoning plan and building office
11. Additional town policy
12. The policy of transparency with corporate entity founded by the town
13. The policy of procurement
14. The policy of concluding the Public Private Partnerships
15. The policy of assigning the apartments
16. The policy of assigning rooms in social institutions of which the town is a grantor
17. The policy of preparing the budget and informing the public of the issue

Next steps:

- A) Preparation of specific anticorruption measures
- B) Preparation of town laws and regulations
- C) Approval by the Town Council
- D) Training and implementation

Project's main objective is to increase the transparency in the decision making processes way above the mandatory scope given by law resulting in an increased public engagement in the governance and accountability, to increase the information flow to the citizens and minimize the potential space for corruption. The increase in information flow should ensure better public access to the policy making in the town. An important step to the future is an implementation of the already existing Digital Town project.

## Electronic auctions and electronic market research

As of today, the most effective tool is the eBIT auctions:

An advantage of the online auction is the support of online processes when issuing the invitation to tenders and choosing proposals. It also allows for the purchases at actual prices, increases transparency of supplier relations and solves supervision of town employees responsible for the purchases. The authentication of the user is assured by generating the login and password during the registration process each user has to go through (login and password are generated as a combination of letters and numbers). At each logging in to eBIT portal or eBIT client, the user must use these login data. All communication is encrypted. Participants are presented by code which changes during auction and of course from auction to auction.

eBIT auctions are a huge benefit. It assists in saving procurement costs, decreases expenses for the purchase procedure, shortens the time between announcing a tender and purchase itself, and it restricts the space for corruption to minimum.

The town of Martin, as a public provider, within procurement of goods, building work and chosen services for contracts between 400 – 3,000 EUR including VAT, has acquired software, which ensures economic, transparent and equal treatment of all applicants. Simultaneously it directly enables to choose responsible employees of the Town Hall to make a market research through the website [www.martin.ebit.sk](http://www.martin.ebit.sk), which allows high participation of potential suppliers in the required survey. Benefits of these online surveys, which are performed from October 10, 2010, are the following:

- Entering an offer directly from the office
- Analysis and evaluation by employees
- Online publication in the real time
- Attendance of applicants without the need to register
- Evidence of research
- Application for online monitoring of changes
- Minimal expenses with the publication

Currently ongoing market research is published on the website [www.martin.ebit.sk](http://www.martin.ebit.sk) under Market Research. To participate in the electronic survey, there is no obligation to register. Applicant has to be legitimate to supply, respectively provide the object of procurement. Potentially a supplier, who is capable to fulfill settled criteria in an appeal, can react to a published offer by completing an application form. After the identification and contact details are given, the required offer price is automatically displayed in the list of publicized offers. An appeal for submission of a price offer is time-limited. Therefore it is necessary for the participant of the Market research to respond within set time. After termination of the survey, responsible employees of the Town Council choose the best offer. To select the successful candidate, the most important is the lowest price. Subsequently, responsible employee issues an order on the won object, respectively makes contract with the applicant. Results of all terminated and evaluated market research is located under Market Research Archive.

Orders with estimated value of goods between 3,000 EUR including VAT to 30,000 EUR without VAT and a building works in the range from 3,000 EUR including VAT to 120,000 without VAT, are assessed in an electronic auction. In the reasonable cases it is possible to proceed in accordance with Directive about public procurement systems number 043, i.e. make a market research by sending an appeal to submit the price offer to at least three potential applicants. It is also possible to publish the offer on the website.

The purpose of an electronic auction is to arrange the order of the offers by automatic evaluation. Electronic auction follows after the first total evaluation of offers submitted by candidates in written form, the determination of offers order is done by the offer evaluation commission according to the criteria determined in the notice of the procurement and in the competition material. Candidate himself or the contracting authority registers the candidate into the system supporting the electrical auction no later than in 24 hours before the beginning of the auction. System then automatically generates login information and sends it to the candidate's subscribed e-mail without contacting authority knowing the login data. After the candidate obtains the login data, he can take part in every electronic auction, where he has the permission to do the business.

All of the electronic auctions accompanied with the surveys are published and archived on the web site [www.martin.ebit.sk](http://www.martin.ebit.sk), where they are available for the public to view.



## Electronic auctions – public procurement

Every participant is hidden behind numeric code generated by our software

Administrators view during electronic auctions

Zákazka: Rozšírenie ... va parkovísk na Družstevnej ulici v MČ Sever						
Najlepšia ponuka: 20000						
Užívateľ	Cena s DPH EUR	Hodnota (Cena s DPH EUR)	Referencie	Hodnota (Referencie)	Splnených podmienok	
3434864	20000	21000	3	3	2 / 2	
3513248	20100	21000	17	3	2 / 2	
3437000	20450	21000	4	3	2 / 2	

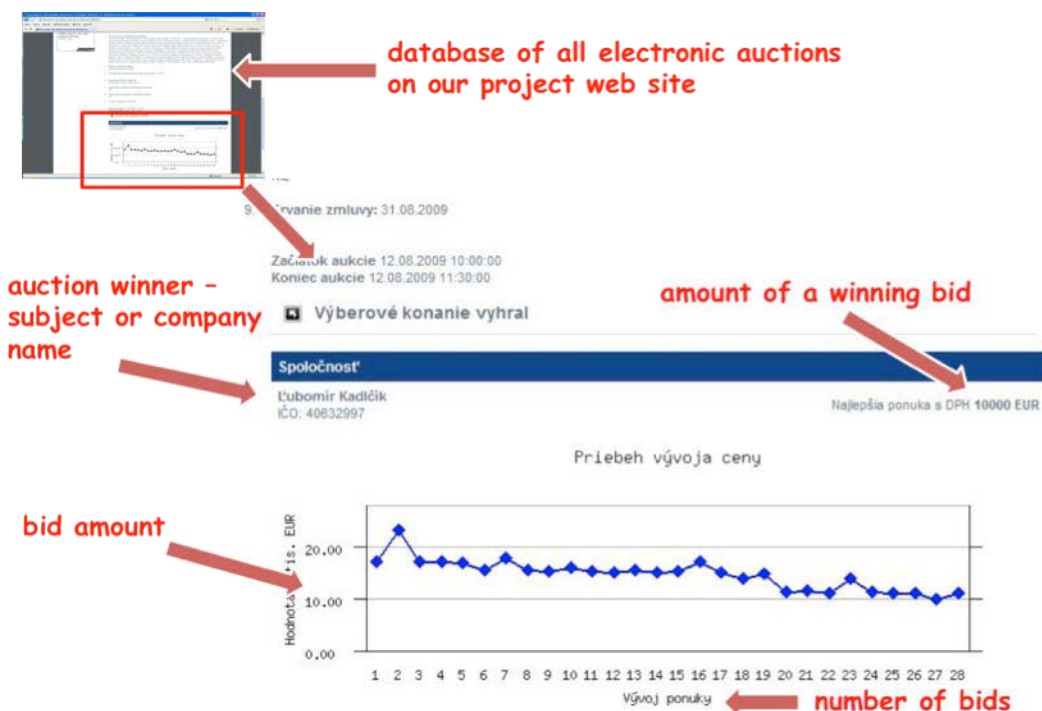
  

Užívateľ	Cena s DPH EUR	Hodnota (Cena s DPH EUR)	Referencie	Hodnota (Referencie)	Splnených podmienok	
3434864	19500	21000	32	3	2 / 2	
CESTNÉ STAVBY ŽILINA spol. s r.o.	19500	21000	3	3	2 / 2	
bulker	20100	21000	17	3	2 / 2	
SKANVOR	20450	21000	4	3	2 / 2	

Administrators view after electronic auctions

During auction we can not see registered companies names because every participant is presented by a unique code which changes during auction. When the auction is completed the winner is that company which accomplished stricken requirements and offered the best price.

When the auction is over, the unique codes change into the names of the companies.



The public can monitor all the electronic auctions retrospectively on our website database. Everybody can see how the price was going down during the electronic auction.

## **Database of town contracts, invoices and orders, map of electronic auctions**

On the website of the town of Martin [www.martin.sk](http://www.martin.sk) we automatically make public the contracts, invoices and orders after they are created. You can find the manual with details for the work with this database, using mentioned documents, in the section with the same title: “Contracts, invoices and orders”.

The page is divided into four blocks: Contracts, Supplied invoices, Customer’s invoices and Orders. Each block contains basic information about published records in a form of the summary tables, e.g.: overall amount, the date of signature, validity, contract parties, ID, object, type, and similarity. To the individual recordings are assigned two documents for the download, from which concrete details are available - as a scanned picture and as a recognized text. In the case that the valid law protecting the personal details does not allow us to disclosure these documents, we are forced to delete these personal details before disclosure.

By using the set of the intuitive instruments, it is possible to change the type of displayed information shown in the table, move in this information, search and sort out recordings according to the different criterions. To easily arrange records by an arbitrary criterion, simply click on an arrow in the right part of every column and thereafter all details sort alternately upturn or descent.

It is possible to sort records with one criterion or by combination of more characteristics. When there is a need to classify recordings by one criterion, this can be achieved by clicking on an arrow in the right part of each column and to find a contract, invoice or order, by inscribing certain detail into the displayed window.

Included in the project of Transparent Town, Martin’s municipality has already published, a total of 18,701 invoices and 3,450 contracts in the last electoral term [from 2007 to 2010]. Moreover, in the electronic auction house is by every capital action publicized a complete proclamation, project documentation and the contract’s entire version.

The Martin Town Hall offers everyone a unique possibility to monitor handling with the public finances. In the beginning is an electronic auction, process of which is published on the website, including all of the price offers, name of the winning subject and the winning price, complete call for procurement, project documentation and the contract’s entire version. Subsequently everybody can monitor on the website, whether the town has really closed a contract with the winning subject. The final competed price offer is even shown in the final invoice. The interesting tool of control from the public side, is a map of the electronic auctions too [ [www.transparentnemesto.sk/mapa](http://www.transparentnemesto.sk/mapa) ]. From December 2010, the town offers a possibility of significant savings for nonprofit organizations, communities of flat owners, and for self-governments of the Turiec region, which is achieved by electronic auctions.

## Database of town contracts, invoices and orders

tool for filtering and sorting data

subject of contract matter

parties concerned

link to document scan

Číslo zmluvy	Rok	Druh	Typ	Predmet	Dátum podpisu	Platnosť do	Zmluvné strany	Hlavná / dodatok	Celková cena zmluvy	MENA	Dokumenty
13				Nájom hrobového miesta 7388 - 7389	03.01.2011		Mesto Martin, fyzická osoba	Hlavná	49.39 EUR		
2315575				Nájom za hrobové miesto č.26	03.01.2011		Mesto Martin, fyzická osoba	Dodatok	24.69 EUR		
1335375				Nájom hrobového miesta 670	03.01.2011		Mesto Martin, fyzická osoba	Hlavná	24.69 EUR		
442534509	2011	hrobového miesta	Zmluva o nájme	Nájom hrobového miesta 4669 - 4670	04.01.2011		Mesto Martin, fyzická osoba	Hlavná	49.39 EUR		
655	2011	Zmluva o výpožičke		Technická zábrana č.468	05.01.2011		Mesto Martin, fyzická osoba	Hlavná	EUR		
330571506	2011	hrobového miesta	Zmluva o nájme	Nájom hrobového miesta 17	05.01.2011		Mesto Martin, fyzická osoba	Hlavná	24.69 EUR		
732531509	2011	hrobového miesta	Zmluva o nájme	Nájom hrobového miesta 4684	05.01.2011		Mesto Martin, fyzická osoba	Hlavná	24.69 EUR		
30539507	2011	hrobového miesta	Zmluva o nájme	Nájom hrobového miesta 7513	05.01.2011		Mesto Martin, fyzická osoba	Hlavná	24.69 EUR		
35552504	2011	hrobového miesta	Zmluva o nájme	Nájom hrobového miesta 15	05.01.2011		Mesto Martin, fyzická osoba	Hlavná	16.46 EUR		

tool for typing in, searching and sorting criteria

date of payment

amount paid

In this section of our web page the public can find all the contracts and invoices the town has made. Database is very intuitive with search and filter options. Each row includes basic information about document and on the top of this, as you can see, on the right side a full scan of each document is available for download.

## Online map of electronic auctions

name of electronic auction

live link to online archive with all details

amount of a winning bid

auction winner - subject or company name

date of electronic auction

saving

real position within the town territory of the project which financing was procured through electronic auction

## How to control public procurement **from A to Z** with web tools:

1. web archive of electronic auctions  
**Winning company with the winning amount of 888 EUR** ✓
2. web database of town contracts  
**Contract with the winner for 888 EUR** ✓
3. web database of town invoices  
**Invoice with actual amount of 888 EUR** ✓

This set of tools is giving citizens very effective way how to look into the whole process of public procurement. Anybody can easily find information on tender calls, process of ongoing and closed transactions, read a concluded contract with a winner of an electronic auction, or check an invoice with the actual sum of money paid by the town to the contractor 24 hours a day 7 days a week. This way we use transparency as a protection against any possibility for corruption to find the way to slip into the process anywhere from the very beginning to the final payment.



## Impact

The initial assumption was an experience with unsatisfactory transparency in the public services and consequences that such state brings: corruption, loss of trust, insufficient control and monitoring from the public, insufficient participation of the public on decision making processes, and missing feedback. When seeking solutions that would improve the existing state, the Mayor of Martin found a partner in the organization - Transparency International Slovensko (TIS). With its assistance, the town was able to launch a project titled “Transparent Town”. The project maximizes the level of transparency with the municipality employees as well as its elected officials. The public procurement, purchase of goods and services, sale and rent of public properties, recruitment of new employees, solving conflicts of interests, or access to information are all fields in which institutions on all levels of public sector make important decisions every day. The project on the other hand minimizes the room for corrupted behavior in these processes. Thanks to the proposed measures, the decisions affecting the efficiency of the handling of public resources and properties are done transparently. The project has provided tools that the public can use to monitor the activities of public sector; it has opportunity to analyze and follow up with active participation.

The project “Transparent Town” has a direct impact on all who are part of the public life. The public can efficiently monitor, be more competent in evaluating, and react and comment the course of the municipality. The added value is the regaining of trust in the performance of public services which is reflected in the higher participation of citizens in the public matters. From the employees and elected officials point of view, the project transparently sets clear rules at decision making processes, for which the public sector is responsible. It minimizes the space for possible corrupted behavior.

If we wanted to support these qualitative attributes with quantitative indicators, we should first mention the introduction of electronic auctions used for the procurement purposes and purchases of goods and services. In the first six months, the town was able to save 28% of anticipated costs, which come from public resources. Everyone thus has a 24/7 access to all invoices, contracts, tenders, procurement, or approved documentation. An interesting benefit is also an increased interest of foreign investors in the land governed by the town of Martin as a final destination of their investments. Investors do not hide that one of the reasons of their particular interest in Martin is the project “Transparent Town”, which guarantees that when dealing with necessary administrative processes at the town hall, they will not come across with corrupted behavior.

A lesson for representatives of municipalities can be a positive example and success of such efforts, at the beginning of which was a resolution and will of one person – the town’s mayor.

## Key benefits

Even though the corruption is hard to be expressed in numbers, the comparable indicator of the success of our project is certainly the saving of the public finances, which the town disposes of. As to day the project's anticorruption measures in place, we saved 23% of anticipated costs. How did we get to this number? Before the implementation of the project into everyday life, procurement was done in accordance with the appropriate laws. Our project voluntarily initiated standards, which go way above the mandatory legislature. One of the measures is an introduction of electronic auctions into the process of procurement. To make the procurement fully transparent, all information regarding the tenders is available 24/7 on an internet domain [www.transparentnemesto.sk](http://www.transparentnemesto.sk). Details about all tenders including a possibility of registration for potential business partners are all available on the domain of our own electronic auction house [martin.ebit.sk](http://martin.ebit.sk). After the launch of electronic auctions, the financial sums that won the auctions have gone rapidly down. So if we realize that the methodology for calculating the anticipated costs has not changes and the only change was the launch of electronic auctions, we can clearly state that reached cost savings of public resources are a direct result of one of the measures of our anticorruption project – the electronic auctions. Same principle is applied to the sale of town properties or a selection of renters of real estate governed by the town. The result is not only a fully transparent process that minimizes room for corruption; it also maximizes financial efficiency of public resources.

We now get to the qualitative benefits. It is a general trend that the public's interest in what is going on in public services is decreasing. It is reflected in dropped numbers of voters during elections to municipalities and government. The common argument of the public is a lack of trust in decision making of elected officials, which is done in a nontransparent manner, many a time behind closed doors and with unclear rules. On one hand, the transparent town website's main goal is to secure a full transparency in the simplest possible manner and to narrow down the space for corruption when the town representatives or employees of public institutions make decisions. On the other hand, it provides the public with tools for monitoring and possible analysis of decision processes. The public may thus evaluate, react and comment on the course of events in public services. The added value to all this should be the regaining of the public's trust in the performance of public officials, which shall directly reflect in the public's participation in the public issues around them.

### Electronic auctions – public procurement

Introduction of electronic auctions used for  
the procurement purposes and purchases of  
goods and services

**= SAVINGS**

Since July 2009 savings

**740 539 EUR**

**21%**

### Benefits

- › **Saves** procurement costs
- › **Decreases expenses** for the purchase procedure
- › **Shortens the time** between putting out a tender and purchase
- › **Restricts the corruption environment** to minimum

## Obstacles

For the project, the Mayor first needed to find a partner who had experience and professional expertise necessary for qualified evaluation of the corruption issue. In order for the partner to assess the municipality environment independently, it had to be an external partner. Because neither the Mayor nor the municipality had no reach or the competency over this partner, his decision to cooperate on this project must have been voluntary. Ideally, the partner was to be a subject of high reputation, which would place an appropriate weight on the outcome of the project. In Slovakia, the ideal partner was found in the Slovak branch of the internationally renowned organization Transparency International (TIS), which fulfilled the first condition of launching a successful preparation process.

I suppose the most significant moment was the communication between the members of the Town Council, who were the only people with competency to approve the financial means necessary to support the project. In the next steps, the members also had to vote with more than half of all votes in order to approve the proposed measures, which could thus replace the existing procedures and internal regulations managing the course of the municipality. Without the needed support of the members of the Town Council, the project itself could not have been formed into actual measures managing the processes and the course of the municipality, its employees as well as elected officials. Public opinion also played an important role, when a general belief of corruption in connection to public services has tired people. Cooperation with TIS, the perfect organization for such role, as well as personal involvement of the US Ambassador to Slovakia, His Excellency Vincent Obsitnik, both proved to be of great aid to the project. The use of transparency in these initial steps came to be an effective tool that can affect the decision making processes of elected officials. Right from the beginning the public had a sufficient amount of information on the project and even those officials, whose personal beliefs would not have led them to support the project, did in fact support it as they realized that their disapproval with the prepared project would have to be voiced out loud and transparently. Such public and open disapproval would have most probably caused serious consequences in the upcoming elections.

In all other steps, the Mayor could rely on his competencies and rights that allowed and assured him that all other parts of the project will be executed by the municipality and town hall employees. Simply said, from his position he was able to ensure the execution of the project with direct orders to his subordinates – municipality employees.

For a complete picture, we must add that some of the proposed measures ensuring the transparency at decision making processes met with obstacles from the legislature point of view. Specifically the disclosure of personal data of employees and elected officials, their family members as well as personal data of all candidates applying for a job with the municipality. Such disclosure of personal information in proposed extent would, according to the legislature, require consent of all involved people. To give an example and to best describe the situation: During a hiring process, the municipality would, under an anticorruption measure, have an obligation to identify and thus disclose all personal information on all candidates. According to the legislature, it is possible only with consent of involved person. To expect that unsuccessful candidates would provide such permission to disclose their personal data would be naïve.

## Resources

Direct financial costs were only needed to pay out the work of internal and external employees of Transparency International Slovensko (TIS). The contracted pay was in the amount of 23 thousand EUR, which the Town Council approved and was thus fully paid out from the town's budget.

The human resources from the municipality played an irreplaceable role. The expert employees from various fields have fulfilled the necessary tasks needed for the preparation and execution of the project within their work hours. The tasks were and are assigned according to employees' job description, resulting from organization structure in the town hall, with concrete deadlines and orders from their direct superiors all the way to the Mayor. As all employees have been fulfilling the tasks during their regular work hours, no additional finances were necessary.

The used technical tools were the property of the town and in full extent covered the needs of the project. No additional technical resources were necessary and thus no additional finances were required. Technical resources used in the project were the municipality offices with standard furniture and needed electronic devices, mainly desktop computers. A special group of technical means were the town's fleet cars that were used for business trips.



## **Sustainability and transferability**

The sustainability of the project anticipates a political will coming from the public interest that protects the project. As the project introduced anticorruption measures that go way above the mandatory legislature, their acceptance was voluntary. It was made possible by freedom of the decision making – voting by the elected town officials. Just like to cancel all changes the project has brought, a will of elected officials would be enough. They would thus have to express their decision again by voting in a town council meeting, with which they would practically cancel the “transparent town” project and its anticorruption package. This is a theory, however. If the elected representatives decided for such steps, in reality it would mean a political suicide. The needed steps would have to be done – thanks to measures that the projects brought on – transparently, publicly. On top of that the uniqueness, success and real positive results of the project have gained a lot of attention and popularity among the public and the media. The project is becoming a better and better example for other municipalities from local level to the very top one, including the ministries and governmental institutions. The project does not restrict any time limits for changes and measures introduced into everyday life. That is why we can justly suspect that the sustainability of the project is assured up until the time when the public services still understand the concepts like transparency, corruption or responsibility.

Transferability of the project, generally in the public sector but also on other levels and other institutions, is ensured by mechanisms that the project encounters. The fundamentals of the decision making in the public sector are basically the same on all levels. In them, elected officials and employees of public institutions make selections that determine public resources and tangible assets they govern. Space thus created for possible corruption is directly proportional to the level of transparency with which the decisions are made. This further sets the level of public’s interest and a level of responsibility and trust that the public places in hands of their elected representatives and employees of public organizations.

Here we must also add that every week the municipality of Martin is contacted by representatives of other municipalities because of the “transparent town” project. It has understandably gained a high publicity and popularity with general public. Logically, public demand arises and with it a pressure on other municipalities on various levels to also realize a similar project. In many cases, an information exchange has been ongoing. There already are initiatives that are trying to implement some of the measures realized with our project into the revisions of legislature the municipalities must obey by. These initiatives require changes in legislature on national level mainly in the field of procurement. It is a big thing for us that this changes on national level through our government and changes in legislature are already taking place also thanks to our project. This is partly but unmistakably caused by our almost three-year initiative: the project Transparent Town.



20,000 flyers in every mailbox in town

**MARTIN**  
www.transparentnemesto.sk  
ANDREJ HRNČIAR  
PRIMÁTOR MESTA MARTIN

Vážení Martinčania,

Až príliš často sa v médiách stretávame so správami o korupcii a netransparentnom narábaní s verejnými financiami a majetkom. Dá sa tomu nájsť aj v našich mestách. Mestský v priestore, ktorým majú platiť zákony chceli samosprávu pre korupciu sú taká veľká, že ním "hondra" preháňa a prijíma veci bez porušenia zákonov. To, čo tak robia, sú potom nadobudnutia. Pre mesto, kde som primátor, som chcel projekt, ktorý "rozviera" tieto opaky, ale ktoré napríklad aj pri celom samospráve či štat. Aj vďaka skúsenostiam a odporu pomoci Transparency International Slovensko sme v Martine, ako prví na Slovensku naplnili kompletný balík protikorupčných opatrení. Tieto opatrenia umožňujú transparentnejšie dianie v samospráve a minimalizujú priestor pre možnú korupciu na všetkých úrovniach. Jednoduchý projekt, ktorý korupciu nemá kam.

Neviem ako Váš, ale slova ma vedľa praveď len do určitéj miery a potom hľadám dôkazy, ktoré ich potvrdia. A takéto dôkazy o tom ako diera, ktorú ste nám vo veľkých a hromadom do risk odovzdali, nespôsobíte v práci, najmä na našej webovej stránke www.transparentnemesto.sk. Sami sa presvedčíte, že sa v meste Martin napríklad, predáva, prenáša, predávajú faktúra či príjmy novú zamestnancov - dajú sa tak transparentne.

Ako príklad uvediem nákup studlej a tovaru. V našom elektronickom aukčnom dome sa o zmluvu a mestom môže uchádzať a v elektronickej aukcii každý. Všetky kroky takéhoto verejného obstarávania sa dajú vidieť. To znamená, že 24 hodín denne si každý môže ľahko nájsť všetky informácie o výzve, príjmu aukčných a uzavretých konaní, predávajú zmluvu, ktorú sme uzavreli s výkazom nákladnej elektronickej aukcie a skontrolovať sumu na faktúre, ktorú sme mesto aj v skutočnosti platilo. Podotnem, že tomu aj pri prijímaní zamestnancov, pridávaní sociálnych bytov, tvorbe všeobecne záväzných nariadení či hlasovaní poslancov.

K zavádzaniu protikorupčných opatrení ma motivoval aj množstvo zmien nevyhnutných pre mesto, ktoré som po nástupe do funkcie primátora našiel po svojich predchodcoch. Nechcem, aby sa v Martine niečo podobné opakovalo. Nechcem, aby si niekedy v budúcnosti, podobne ako my teraz, mesto vedelo mať bezproblémovú prácu nad neregulovanými zmluvami. Preto som sám navrhol, aby v rámci protikorupčných opatrení bol moja zákonná právomoc obmedzená a primátor tak namoží sám za zatvorenej dvere podpísať nevyhnutnú zmluvu.

Transparentnosť sa najmä len kontrolovanie toho, čo sa už ušlo. Náš projekt umožňuje sledovať a priamo kontrolovať naše kroky ako predtým, ako sa niečo odosielajú, odkladajú, uzavrie. Očien sa tak skutočne môže spoľahnúť na chode vecí verejných. Vďaka projektu môže dianie sledovať, ako ho aj pripomínať, a tak vyvíjať naše rozhodnutia, ich prípravu. Očien sa tak priamo stáva aktívnou súčasťou samosprávy mesta.

Ak som na začiatku spomínal správy a korupčných škandálov v médiách, že je o meste Martin sa v týchto dňoch stále hovorí, nie je určite náhoda. Je to výsledok tvrdej práce, ktorú odovzdáme pri ďalšom rozvíjaní nášho projektu transparentného mesta. Každý výskyt sa stretávame a mnohým pozitívnym ohlasom a verím, že aj vďaka nim sa náš projekt nespôsobí stane návodom pre iné samosprávy alebo štát. Podporu skutočného nášho projektu aj výskyt nepriateľských síl zameraných na zničenie, Američi prichádzajú, či bývalý veľvyslanec Vincent Džurinský. Dôkazom správnosti našich krokov a ich medzinárodného uznania je nominácia nášho protikorupčného projektu na najvyššieho ocenenia OEN za verejnú službu.

Vážení spoluobčania, chcem Vás vyzvať, aby ste aj Vy pomohli naplniť myseľ projektu transparentného mesta. Nástroje na prahu a transparentní kontroli volených zástupcov, ktoré v Martine ako jediní na Slovensku máme, by totiž nemali zmysel, ak by ste ich nevyužívali. Je to Váš, aby ste transparentnú dianie verejných záležitostí nášho transparentného mesta sledovali, ako a dôveru a pripravenosti, ktoré ste nám zverili, nakladáte v prax. Je to Váš, aby ste využili túto príležitosť a podotknúť sa nám pozreli aj Vy.

Andrej Hrnčiar  
primátor mesta Martin

**NÁM DO HRNCA VIDÍ KAŽDÝ**  
TRANSPARENTNÉ MESTO  
WWW.TRANSPARENTNEMESTO.SK

Ako nás môžete kontrolovať prostredníctvom našej webovej stránky  
www.transparentnemesto.sk

**ELEKTRONICKÉ AUKČIE – VEREJNÉ OBSTARÁVANIE:** V našom vlastnom elektronickom aukčnom dome prebieha verejné obstarávanie formou elektronických aukcií. Nájdete tu aktuálne výzvy, detaily a prebiehajúce aukcie, ich priebeh, výkonnú sumu, meno víťaza a mnoho ďalších detailov. A ak viete o niekom, kto nám vie niečo predáť, alebo urobiť niečo lacnejšie, preveďte ho, aby sa nabudilo do aukcie pridať aj on!

**ZMLUVY:** V tejto sekcii si môžete pozrieť všetky zmluvy, ktoré mesto uzavrie. Môžete si tu prečítať aj zmluvu, ktorú mesto uzavrelo s výkazom nákladnej elektronickej aukcie a skontrolovať, či je zmluvná suma rovnaká ako počas súťaže, a či mesto s ňou neuzatváralo ďalšie dodatky k zmluve.

**FAKTÚRY:** Táto sekcia obsahuje všetky faktúry, ktoré mesto vyplatilo. Ak ste skontrolovali zmluvu a výkazom nákladnej elektronickej aukcie, sa tento môže môžete skontrolovať, či sa suma na faktúre, ktorú sme mu zaplatili nespôsobí zhoduje so sumou na zmluve a sumou v elektronickej aukcii.

**OBSTARÁVANIE VOLNÝCH PRACOVNÝCH MIEST – VYBEROVÉ KONANIA:** Nájdete tu oznamy o voľných pracovných miestach a výberových konaniach, zápisnice z výberových konaní, oznamy o obsadení pracovných miest, a samozrejme aj meno úspešného kandidáta a pozíciu na ktorú sme ho prijali.

**ROZPOČET A INVESTÍCIE:** Rozpočet a komentár k nemu, zmeny rozpočtu a investičné akcie mesta nájdete v tejto sekcii.

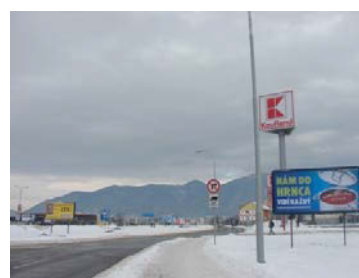
**DOTAČIE:** Všetko o dotáciách, cieľ dotácií, postup pri podávaní žiadostí, typy žiadostí, všetky podané žiadosti a zoznam tých, ktorým sme dotácie udelili.

**KALENDÁR PRIMÁTORA:** Všetci, čo v transparentnom meste majú občianske právo poznať pracovný program ich primátora, a tak vedieť, čo ich primátor robí. Preto som spustil túto sekciu. Ak chcete vedieť čo robím zajtra, nech sa páči. Pozrite sa.

**OEN OTVORENÝCH DVERÍ:** Každý má právo stretnúť sa so svojím primátorom, pozrieť sa mu do očí, podeliť sa o starosti, ktoré ho v našom meste trápia, či pochopiť mesto zo obmedzených zdrojov. Aby tak mohol urobiť každý aj bez toho, aby si dopredu musel rezervovať termín stretnutia, zaviedol som každý prvý pondelok v mesiaci dň otvorených dverí. Vtedy má občania medzi 14. a 18. hodinou navštíviť priamo v mojej kancelárii na druhom poschodí na mestskom úrade.

**OEN MESTSKÝ ČASŤ:** Každý druhý pondelok v mesiaci navštívi niektorú mestskú časť. V spolupráci s jej poslancami si naplánujem cestu, po ktorej prejdeme mestskou časťou. Na miestach, ktoré nás najviac trápia, sa môžeme spoločne pozrieť, ako čo najvhodnejšie nájsť uspokojivé riešenia. Dň mestských častí zaviedol verejnou schôdzou a jej obsahom. Zverejníme zápis a odpoveď plemia zo schôdzky.

Every mailbox in the town received a flyer about our project. One side explained why mayor have decided to start such a project. On back side ours citizens can find explanation how to use basic tools in order to monitor municipality.



We also made a massive campaign thru town streets and in local media in order to increase public engagement in public governance and public finances. We want our citizens to monitor us. Because the project would be useless if our citizens did not use it on regular basis.

## Open days in Mayor's office on monthly basis



Every first Monday of a month we have “An open door day“ which means, that anybody can walk right into the mayor's office and talk to him about any problem they have without making an appointment in advance. Every suggestion or comment is noted and during the next briefing with mayor staff, I assign it so it is resolved.

K17											
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
		ID number	datum	prírodné číslo	meno	kontakt	vec	prírodné číslo	datum prídelenia	datum plnenia	vybavené
3		201109/01	5. september 2011	Barák	Jaroslav		chce ho dobra vyťahovať z bytu, potrebuje aspoň garážku	Cingel			
4		201109/02	5. september 2011	Torsková	Miroslava	805222371	problém s bezbarierovým prístupom, problém s posilovacími, sčítaním, previer	Přík privovaný Zauj.			
5		201109/03	5. september 2011	Jesenská	Janka	434278107	odkupenie bytu	Gallo			
6		201109/04	5. september 2011	Torník	Dušan	Rovienka 4	hľadá a nájomný 2 ubývajú opätovne Matriu				
7		201109/05	5. september 2011	Bobák	Roman	434287096	práva rada - novoplat mu robí okná a tečú mu	Šagárová			
8		201109/06	5. september 2011	Paľta	Igor	964150436	chce, aby primátor začal s výstavbou cesty podstaty primátorov				
9		201109/07	5. september 2011	Kováčková		434270073	príloha podkladov sa vyžaduje predchádzajúce posudzovanie v konkr. napríklad list: má neamestnanú dobru Milánovú jamu od 2004 (6. rokov a uči 1-4)	ist poslaný ďalej			
10		201109/08	5. september 2011	Hulej	Dušan	805654506, 9101666	Kráčnová ulica, kanalizačné napácha, vrt sa ide aspoňovať, kamiónová premávka, rovník topka a výška prístrojopodrobné na sústavných posudzov	Záborská pošta DMC			
11		201109/09	5. september 2011	Pobuda	Ján	4342222334	informácie ohľadom fotografií a galérie s oslávencami, z dňa Martina				
12		201109/10	5. september 2011	Holstvej	Jozef	903310246, jozef.holstvej@hu.uniz	deti a mládežnícke organizácie v MT, prevádzka záberu nad festivalom vedy a techniky 7. októbra - osobne aj otvoriť	Ujger			
13		201109/11	5. september 2011	Stredová	Denisa		výmena bytu	Gallo			
14		201109/12	5. september 2011	Kózo	Jaroslav s manželkou	805137899	keď končíme pohotovosť v Prieboji, merali prístroj na hlučnosť, pakcie 777, príj. VZK o hlučnosť alebo iné opatrenia,	MSP, Muž			
15		201109/13	5. september 2011	Lukáčová	Danka		zmluva podporujúca so štruktúrou, odpredu bytu	Gallo privovaný			
16		201109/14	5. september 2011	Výštel	Robert		premiom posudzku, než sa to cez prevádzku a odpredu na internete? Chýbajú informácie ohľadom dostavy objektu Helios, zámer garáže, UHA má výhrady, nájsť riešenie				
17		201109/15	5. september 2011	Šupala	Ján	918676325					



## Day of Town Borough

Every second Monday of a month we have meetings with the public from different parts of the town, the so-called Day of the borough. During Open days the mayor invites people to see him in his office. On the occasion of the Day of the borrow mayor invites people to meet him in the streets of the particular borrow to talk about problems right on the spots related to it. For this purpose, with the help of the town parliament members, we carefully choose a route through the borough so we include the most talked about spots.



Beforehand, we make this route public via a flyer, just like the one you see on this page, so public can easily catch up with us. After a walk is over we have a public meeting at that borrow. Again, every comment is noted and later assigned for execution.



**MARTIN**

Primátor Andrej Hrnčiar a poslanci mestskej časti Priekopa Peter Kašuba, Ľubomír Sýkora, Stanislav Thomka, Ľubomír Vaňko, Peter VonsVás v rámci projektu Transparentné mesto pozývajú na

### Deň mestskej časti Priekopa

v pondelok 12. septembra 2011 od 15.30 do 17.00 hod

Obchádzka mestskej časti s primátorom a s poslancami po plánovanej trase:  
Partizánsky cintorín, Za Jordánom, Kratinova, Volgogradská, Dolinského, Čajkovského.  
Túto trasu môžete s nimi absolvovať aj Vy a priamo na mieste sa porozprávať o problémoch, ktoré Vás vo Vašom okolí trápia.

**Verejná schôdza s občanmi Priekopy**  
17.30 hod - polyfunkčný objekt ul. Lipová



## Awards and recognition



We had a privilege that our work got noticed by some institutions. Recognition we appreciate the most is the United Public Service Award. The UN General Assembly, in its Resolution 57/277, designated **June 23** as **Public Service Day**. The UN Public Service Day intends to celebrate the value and virtue of public service to the community; highlight the contribution of public service in the development process; recognize the work of public servants, and encourage young people to pursue careers in the public sector.

Nominees are evaluated and the Awards are given within the five geographic regions and five categories. Our project Transparent Town is the 1<sup>st</sup> place winner in the category “Preventing and combating corruption in the public service” within the region of Europe and North America. It was also an honor for us that the first person who saw the award and the certificate when we brought them home to Slovakia was the president of the Slovak Republic Mr. Ivan Gasparovic.



But to complete the picture, we have to add this. Yes, with a project like this one and with all its success you become quite popular. But make no mistake. You also make some powerful and well funded enemies.

Another well appreciated recognition for project Transparent Town came from European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) in form of **EPSA 2011 Best Practice Certificate** we were awarded with on November 15<sup>th</sup> 2011 in Maastricht in one of the three categories: **"Opening Up the Public Sector Through Collaborative Governance"**. EIPA is a neutral and impartial institute that benefits from reliable direct links with all EU governments and Institutions EIPA has some 30 years of experience in leading-edge training, applied research and consultancy regarding issues of European integration and public management.



The European Public Service Award (EPSA) brings together the best, most innovative and efficient performers from the European public sector. By highlighting exemplary models of innovative public performance, the award will serve as a catalyst for continued progress in addressing Europe's most pressing concerns whilst providing a platform for the public sector innovators behind these cases to disseminate their achievements. The EPSA's objective is to make these valuable experiences transparent, known to the public and usable.